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A  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
LIFE AND VOYAGES  
OF  
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.

A  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
LIFE AND VOYAGES  
OF  
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.  
BY  
WASHINGTON IRVING.

Venient annis  
Sæcula seris, quibus Oceanus  
Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens  
Pateat tellus, Typhisque novos  
Detegat Orbes, nec sit terris  
Ultima Thule.

*Seneca, Medea.*

IN FOUR VOLUMES.  
VOL. IV.

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MDCCCXXVIII.





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THE  
LIFE AND VOYAGES  
OF  
COLUMBUS.

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BOOK XVIII.

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CHAPTER I.

DEPARTURE OF COLUMBUS FOR ST. DOMINGO.—HIS  
RETURN TO SPAIN.

[1504.]

ON the 28th of June Columbus took a joyful leave of the wreck in which he had been so long immured, and all the Spaniards embarked, friend and foe, on board of the vessels, which made sail for St. Domingo. Oviedo says, that the Indians wept when they beheld their departure ; for they considered them as beings from the skies. From the admiral, it is true, they had experienced nothing but kind treatment and continual benefits ; and the idea of his immediate influence with the Deity, manifested by his prediction of the eclipse

of the moon, may have made them consider his presence propitious to their island ; but it is not easy to believe that a lawless gang, like that of Porras, could have been ranging for months among their villages without giving cause for the greatest joy at their departure.

The adverse winds and currents, which had opposed Columbus throughout this ill-starred expedition, still continued to harass him. After a weary struggle of several weeks, he reached, on the 3d of August, the little island of Beata, on the coast of Hispaniola. Between this place and St. Domingo the currents are so violent, that vessels are often detained months, waiting for sufficient wind to enable them to stem the stream. From hence Columbus despatched a letter by land to Ovando, to inform him of his approach, and to remove certain absurd suspicions of his views, which he had learnt from Saleedo were still entertained by the governor, who feared his arrival in the island might lead to factions and disturbances. In this letter he expresses, with his usual warmth and simplicity, the joy he felt at his deliverance, which was so great, he says, that, since

the arrival of Diego de Saleedo with succour, he had scarcely been able to sleep.

A favourable wind springing up, the vessels again made sail, and on the 13th of August anchored in the harbour of St. Domingo. Whatever lurking enmity to Columbus there might be in the place, it was overpowered by the popular sense of his recent disasters. Misfortune atones for a multitude of faults, whereas the very merits of a prosperous man excite detraction. St. Domingo, where Columbus in the day of his power had been surrounded by foes ; from whence he had been ignominiously sent in chains, amidst the shouts and taunts of the rabble ; from whence he had been excluded in a time of peril, when commander of a squadron ; now that he arrived in the harbour of St. Domingo, a broken-down and shipwrecked man, all forgot their past hostility, and were aroused to sudden enthusiasm in his favour. What had been denied to his merits was granted to his misfortunes ; and even the envious, appeased by his present reverses, seemed to forgive him for having once been so triumphant.

The governor and all the principal inhabitants

came forth to meet him, and received him with signal distinction. He was lodged as a guest in the house of Ovando, who treated him with the utmost courtesy and attention. The governor was a shrewd and discreet man, and much of a courtier ; but there were too deep causes of jealousy and distrust between him and Columbus for their intercourse to be cordial. Both the admiral and his son Fernando always pronounced the civility of Ovando overstrained and hypocritical, intended to obliterate the remembrance of past neglect, and to conceal his lurking enmity. While he professed the utmost friendship and sympathy for the admiral, he set at liberty the traitor Porras, who was still a prisoner, to be taken to Spain for trial. He also talked of punishing those of the admiral's people who had taken arms in his defence, had killed several of the mutineers, and taken others prisoners. These circumstances were loudly complained of by Columbus ; but, in fact, they rose out of a question of jurisdiction between him and the governor. Their powers were so undefined as to clash with each other, and they were both in a situation to be extremely punctilious. Ovando

assumed a right to take cognizance of all transactions at Jamaica, as happening within the limits of his government, which included all the islands and terra firma. Columbus, on the other hand, asserted the absolute command, and the jurisdiction both civil and criminal given to him by the sovereigns, over all persons who sailed in his expedition, from the time of departure until their return to Spain. To prove this, he produced his letter of instructions. The governor heard him with great courtesy and a smiling countenance; but observed, that the letter of instructions gave him no authority within the bounds of his government\*. He relinquished the idea, however, of investigating the conduct of the followers of Columbus, and sent Porras to Spain, to be examined by the board which had charge of the affairs of the Indies.

The sojourn of Columbus at St. Domingo was but little calculated to yield him satisfaction. He was grieved at the desolation of the island by the oppressive treatment of the natives, and the horri-

\* Letter of Columbus to his son Diego, Seville. Nov. 21, 1504. Navarrete Col. t. i.



ble massacre which had been perpetrated by Ovando and his agents. Columbus had fondly hoped, at one time, to have rendered the natives civilized, industrious, and tributary subjects to the crown, and to have derived from their well-regulated labour a great and steady revenue. How different had been the event ! The five great tribes which had peopled the mountains and the valleys at the time of the discovery, and had rendered, by their mingled towns and villages and tracts of cultivation, the rich levels of the Vegas so many “ painted gardens,” had almost all passed away, and the native princes had perished chiefly by violent or ignominious deaths. Columbus regarded the affairs of the island with a different eye from Ovando. He had a paternal feeling for its prosperity, and his fortunes were implicated in its judicious management. He complained, in subsequent letters to the sovereigns, that all the public affairs were ill conducted ; that the ore which was collected lay unguarded in large quantities in houses slightly built and thatched, inviting depredation ; that Ovando was unpopular, the people were dissolute, and the property of the crown and the security

of the island in continual risk from mutiny and sedition\*. While he saw all this, he had no power to interfere, and any observation or remonstrance on his part was apt to be ill received by the governor.

He found his own immediate concerns in great confusion. His rents and dues were either uncollected, or he could not obtain a clear account and a full liquidation of them. Whatever he could collect was appropriated to the fitting out of the vessels which were to convey himself and his crews to Spain. He accuses Ovando, in his subsequent letters, of having neglected, if not sacrificed, his interests during his long absence, and of having impeded those who were appointed to attend to his concerns. That he had some grounds for these complaints would appear from two letters still extant†, written by Queen Isabella to Ovando, on the 27th of November, 1503, in which she informs him of the complaint of Alonzo Sanchez de Carajal, that he was impeded in collecting the rents

\* Letter of Columbus to his son Diego, dated Seville, 3 Dec. 1504. Navarrete, t. i. p. 341.

† Navarrete Collec. t. ii. Decad. 151, 152.

of the admiral ; and expressly commands Ovando to observe the capitulations granted to Columbus, to respect his agents, and to facilitate instead of obstructing his concerns. These letters, while they imply ungenerous conduct on the part of the governor towards his illustrious predecessor, evince likewise the personal interest taken by Isabella in the affairs of Columbus, during his absence. She had, in fact, signified her displeasure at his being excluded from the port of St. Domingo, when he applied there for succour for his squadron, and for shelter from a storm ; and had censured Ovando for not taking his advice and detaining the fleet of Bobadilla, by which it would have escaped its disastrous fate\*. And here it may be observed, that the sanguinary acts of Ovando towards the natives, in particular the massacre at Haragna, and the execution of the unfortunate Anacoana, awakened equal horror and indignation in Isabella ; she was languishing on her death-bed when she received the intelligence, and with her dying breath she exacted a promise from King Ferdinand that Ovando should immediately be recalled from

\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. Decad. I. l. 5. c. 12.

his government. The promise was tardily and reluctantly fulfilled, after an interval of about four years, and not until induced by other circumstances; for Ovando contrived to propitiate the monarch, by forcing a revenue from the island.

The continual misunderstandings which took place between the admiral and the governor, though always qualified on the part of the latter with great complaisance, induced Columbus to hasten as much as possible his departure from the island. The ship in which he had returned from Jamaica was repaired and fitted out, and put under the command of the adelantado; another vessel was freighted, in which Columbus embarked with his son and his domestics. The greater part of his late crews remained at St. Domingo; as they were in great poverty, he relieved their necessities with his own purse, and advanced the funds necessary for the voyage home of those who chose to return. Many thus relieved by his generosity had been among the most violent of the rebels.

On the 12th of September, he set sail; but had scarcely left the harbour when, in a sudden squall, the mast of his ship was carried away.

He immediately went with his family on board of the vessel commanded by the adelantado, and, sending back the damaged ship to port, continued on his course. Throughout the voyage he experienced the most tempestuous weather. In one storm the mainmast was sprung in four places. The admiral was confined to his bed at the time by the gout; by his advice, however, and the activity of the adelantado, the damage was skillfully repaired: the mast was shortened; the weak parts were fortified by wood taken from the castles or cabins, which the vessels in those days carried on the prow and stern; and the whole was well secured by cords. They were still more damaged in a succeeding tempest; in which the ship sprung her foremast. In this crippled state, they had yet to traverse seven hundred leagues of a stormy ocean. Fortune continued to persecute Columbus to the end of this, his last, and most disastrous, expedition. For several weeks he was tempest tost—suffering at the same time the most excruciating pains from his malady—until, at length, on the seventh day of November, his crazy and shattered bark anchored in the harbour of San



Lucar. From hence he had himself conveyed to Seville, where he hoped to enjoy repose of mind and body, and to recruit his health after such a long series of fatigues, anxieties, and hardships\*.

\* Hist. del Almirante, c. 108. Las Casas, Hist. Ind. l. ii. c. 36.

## CHAPTER II.

ILLNESS OF COLUMBUS AT SEVILLE.—APPLICATION TO  
THE CROWN FOR A RESTITUTION OF HIS HONOURS.  
—DEATH OF ISABELLA.

[1504.]

BROKEN by age and infirmities, and worn down by the toils and hardships of his recent expedition, Columbus had looked forward to Seville as to a haven of rest, where he might repose awhile from his troubles. Care and sorrow, however, were destined to follow him by sea and land. In varying the scene he but varied the nature of his distress. “Wearisome days and nights” were appointed to him for the remainder of his life; and the very margin of his grave was destined to be strewed with thorns.

On arriving at Seville, he found all his affairs in confusion. Ever since he had been sent home in chains from Saint Domingo, when his house and effects had been taken possession of by Bobadilla, his rents and dues had never been properly collected; and such as had been gathered had

been retained in the hands of the governor Ovando. “ I have much vexation from the governor,” says he, in a letter to his son Diego\*. “ All tell me that I have there eleven or twelve thousand castellanos ; and I have not received a quarto. \* \* \* \* I know well, that, since my departure, he must have received upwards of five thousand castellanos.” He entreated that a letter might be written by the king, commanding the payment of these arrears without delay ; for his agents would not venture even to speak to Ovando on the subject, unless empowered by a letter from the sovereign.

Columbus was not of a mercenary spirit ; but his rank and situation required large expenditure. The world thought him in the possession of sources of inexhaustible wealth ; but to him, as yet, those sources had furnished but precarious and scanty streams. His last voyage had exhausted his finances, and involved him in perplexities. All that he had been able to collect of the money due to him in Hispaniola, to the amount of twelve hundred castellanos, had been expended in bring-

\* Let. Seville, 13 Dec. 1504. Navarrete, v. i. p. 343.

ing home many of his late crew, who were in distress; and for the greater part of the sum the crown remained his debtor. While struggling to obtain his mere pecuniary dues, he was absolutely suffering a degree of penury. He repeatedly urges the necessity of economy to his son, Diego, until he can obtain a restitution of his property, and the payment of his arrears. "I receive nothing of the revenue due to me," says he, in one letter; "I live by borrowing." "Little have I profited," he adds, in another, "by twenty years of service, with such toils and perils; since, at present, I do not own a roof in Spain. If I desire to eat or sleep, I have no resort but an inn; and, for the most times, have not wherewithal to pay my bill."

Yet in the midst of these personal distresses, he was still more solicitous for the payment of his seamen than of himself. He wrote strongly and repeatedly to the sovereigns, entreating the discharge of their arrears; and he urged his son, Diego, who was at court, to exert himself likewise in their behalf. "They are poor," said he, "and it is now nearly three years since they left their

homes. They have endured infinite toils and perils, and they bring invaluable tidings, for which their majesties ought to give thanks to God and rejoice." Notwithstanding his generous solicitude for these men, he knew several of them to have been his enemies ; nay, that some of them were at this very time disposed to do him harm rather than good ; such was the magnanimity of his spirit and his forgiving disposition.

The same zeal, also, for the interests of his sovereigns, which had ever actuated his loyal mind, mingled with his other causes of solicitude. He represented in his letter to the king, the mismanagement of the royal rents in Hispaniola, under the administration of Ovando. Immense quantities of ore lay unprotected in slightly built houses, and liable to depredations. It required a person of vigour, and one who had an individual interest in the property of the island, to restore its affairs to order, and to draw from it the immense revenues which it was capable of yielding ; and Columbus plainly intimated that he was the proper person.

In fact, as to himself, it was not so much

pecuniary indemnification that he sought, as the restoration of his offices and dignities. He had received the royal promise that he should be reinstated in them; he regarded them as the trophies of his illustrious achievements; and he felt that as long as they were withheld, a tacit censure rested upon his name. Had he not been proudly impatient on this subject he would have belied the loftiest part of his character; for he who can be indifferent to the wreath of triumph, is deficient in the noble ambition that incites to glorious deeds.

The unsatisfactory replies which he received to his letters disquieted the mind of Columbus. He knew that he had active enemies at court ready to turn all things to his disadvantage; and he felt the importance of being there in person to defeat their machinations: but his infirmities detained him at Seville. He made an attempt to set forth on the journey, but the severity of the winter and the virulence of his malady obliged him to relinquish it in despair. All that he could do was to reiterate his letters to the sovereigns, and to entreat the intervention of his few but faithful

friends. He feared the disastrous occurrences of the last voyage might be represented to his prejudice. The great object of the expedition, the discovery of a strait in the Isthmus of Darien, had failed. The secondary object, the acquisition of gold, had not been completed. He had discovered the gold mines of Veragua, it is true, but he had brought home no treasure ; because, as he said, in one of his letters, “ I would not rob or outrage the country ; since reason requires that it should be settled, and then the gold may be procured without violence.”

He was especially apprehensive that the violent scenes in the island of Jamaica, might, by the perversity of his enemies, and the effrontery of the delinquents, be wrested into matters of accusation against him, as had been the case with the rebellion of Roldan. Porras, the ringleader of the late faction, had been sent home by Ovando, to appear before the board of the Indies ; but without any written process, setting forth the offences charged against him. While at Jamaica, Columbus had ordered an inquest of the affair to be taken ; but the notary of the squadron who took it, and



the papers which he drew up, were on board of a ship in which the admiral had sailed from Hispaniola, and which had put back dismasted. No cognizance of the case, therefore, was taken by the council of the Indies; and Porras went at large, armed with the power and the disposition to do mischief. Being related to Morales, the royal treasurer, he had access to people in place, and an opportunity of enlisting their opinions and prejudices on his side. Columbus wrote to Morales enclosing him a copy of the petition which the rebels had sent to him when in Jamaica, acknowledging their culpability, and imploring his forgiveness: and he entreated the treasurer not to be swayed by the representations of his relation, nor to pronounce an opinion unfavourable to him, until he had an opportunity of being heard.

The faithful and indefatigable Diego Mendez was at this time at the court, as well as Alonzo Sanchez de Carrajal, and an active friend of Columbus named Geronimo. He requested his son Diego to excite them all to support his interests, being capable of bearing the most important testimony as to his conduct. "I trust," said he,



“that the truth and diligence of Diego Mendez will be of as much avail as the lies of Porras.” Nothing can surpass the affecting earnestness and simplicity of his general declaration of loyalty, contained in one of his letters. “I have served their majesties,” says he, “with as much zeal and diligence as if it had been to gain Paradise; and if I have failed in any thing, it has been because my knowledge and powers went no further.”

Whilst reading these touching appeals, we can scarcely realize the fact, that they should be written by Columbus; by the same extraordinary man who but a few years before had been idolized at this court as a benefactor, and received with almost royal honours. We can scarcely believe, that this is the discoverer of the New World, broken down by infirmities, and impoverished in his old age by his very success; that the man who added such vast and wealthy regions to the crown, is the individual thus wearily and vainly applying to the court of Spain for his rights, and pleading almost like a culprit, in cases wherein he had been so flagrantly injured.

At length the caravel bringing the official proceedings relative to the brothers Porras arrived at the Algarves, in Portugal, and Columbus looked forward with hope that all matters would soon be placed in a proper light. His anxiety to get to court became every day more intense. A litter was provided to convey him thither, and was actually at the door, but he was again obliged to abandon the journey from the inclemency of the weather and his increasing infirmities. His resource of letter-writing began to fail him: he could only write at night, for in the daytime the severity of his malady deprived him of the use of his hands. The tidings from the court were every day more and more adverse to his hopes: the intrigues of his enemies were prevailing; the cold hearted Ferdinand treated all his applications with indifference; the generous Isabella lay dangerously ill. On her justice and magnanimity he still relied for the full restoration of his rights, and the redress of all his grievances. "May it please the Holy Trinity," says he, "to restore our sovereign queen to health; for by her will

every thing be adjusted which is now in confusion." Alas! while writing that letter, his noble benefactress was a corpse!

The health of Isabella had long been undermined by the shocks of repeated domestic calamities. The death of her only son, the prince Juan; of her beloved daughter and bosom friend, the princess Isabella; and of her grandson and prospective heir, the prince Miguel, had been three cruel wounds to a heart full of the tenderest sensibility. To these, was added the constant grief caused by the evident infirmity of intellect of her daughter Juana, and the domestic unhappiness of that princess with her husband, the archduke Philip. The desolation which walks through palaces admits not the familiar sympathies and sweet consolations which alleviate the sorrows of common life. Isabella pined in state, amidst the obsequious homages of a court, surrounded by the trophies of a glorious and successful reign, and placed at the summit of earthly grandeur. A deep and incurable melancholy had settled upon her, which undermined her constitution, and gave a fatal acuteness to her bodily maladies. After

four months of illness, she died on the 26th of November, 1504, at Medina del Campo, in the fifty-fourth year of her age ; but long before her eyes closed upon the world, her heart had closed on all its pomps and vanities. “ Let my body,” said she in her will, “ be interred in the monastery of San Francisco, which is in the Alhambra of the city of Granada, in a low sepulchre, without any monument except a plain stone, with the inscription cut on it. But I desire and command, that if the king, my lord, should choose a sepulchre in any church or monastery in any other part or place of these my kingdoms, that my body shall be transported thither, and buried beside the body of his highness ; so that the union we have enjoyed while living, and which, through the mercy of God, we hope our souls will experience in heaven, may be represented by our bodies in the earth.”

Such was one of several passages in the will of this admirable woman, which bespoke the chastened humility of her heart ; and in which, as has been well observed, the affections of conjugal love were delicately entwined with piety and with the most

tender melancholy\*. She was one of the purest spirits that ever ruled over the destinies of a nation. Had she been spared, her benignant vigilance would have prevented many a scene of horror in the colonization of the New World, and have softened the lot of its native inhabitants. As it is, her fair name will ever shine with celestial radiance in the early dawning of its history.

The news of the death of Isabella reached Columbus when he was writing a letter to his son Diego. He notices it in a postscript or memorandum, written in the haste and brevity of the moment, but in beautifully touching and mournful terms. "A memorial," he writes, "for thee, my dear son Diego, of what is at present to be done. The principal thing is to commend affectionately, and with great devotion, the soul of the queen our sovereign to God. Her life was always catholic and holy, and prompt to all things in his holy service: for this reason we may rest assured that she is received into his glory, and beyond the cares of this rough and weary world. The next thing is to watch and labour in all matters for the

\* Elogio de la Reina Catolica por D. Diego Clemencia. Illustration 19.

service of our sovereign the king, and to endeavour to alleviate his grief. His majesty is the head of Christendom. Remember the proverb which says, when the head suffers all the members suffer. Therefore all good Christians should pray for his health and long life ; and we, who are in his employ, ought more than others to do this with all study and diligence \*.”

It is impossible to read without emotion this simply eloquent and mournful letter ; in which, by such artless touches, Columbus expresses his tenderness for the memory of his benefactress, his weariness under the gathering cares and ills of life, and his persevering and enduring loyalty to the sovereign who was so ungratefully neglecting him. It is in these unstudied and confidential letters that we read the heart of Columbus.

\* Letter to his son Diego, Dec. 3, 1504.

## CHAPTER III.

## COLUMBUS ARRIVES AT COURT.—FRUITLESS APPLICATION TO THE KING FOR REDRESS.

[1505.]

THE death of Isabella was a fatal blow to the fortunes of Columbus. While she lived, he had every thing to anticipate from her high sense of justice, her regard for her royal word, her gratitude for his services, and her admiration of his character. With her illness, however, his interests had languished, and when she died, he was left to the justice and generosity of Ferdinand.

During the remainder of the winter and a part of the spring, he continued at Seville, detained by painful illness, and endeavouring to obtain redress from the government by ineffectual letters. His brother the adelantado, who supported him with his accustomed fondness and devotion through all his trials, proceeded to court to attend to his interests, taking with him the admiral's younger son Fernando, then aged about seventeen. The latter,



the affectionate father repeatedly represents to his son Diego as a man in understanding and conduct, though but a stripling in years ; and inculcates the strongest fraternal attachment, alluding to his own brethren with one of those beautifully artless and affecting touches which speak the kindness of his heart. “To thy brother conduct thyself as the elder brother should unto the younger. Thou hast no other, and I praise God that this is such a one as thou dost need. Ten brothers would not be too many for thee. Never have I found a better friend than my brothers.”

Among the persons whom Columbus employed at this time in his missions to the court, was Amerigo Vespuccio. He describes him as a worthy but unfortunate man, who had not profited as much as he deserved by his undertakings, and who had always been disposed to render him service. His object in employing him appears to have been to prove the value of his last voyage, and that he had been in the most opulent parts of the New World ; Vespuccio having since touched upon the same coast, in a voyage with Alonzo de Ojeda.



One circumstance occurred at this time which shed a gleam of hope and consolation over the gloomy prospects of the admiral. His ancient and tried friend, Diego de Deza, who had been some time bishop of Palentia, was expected at court. This was the same worthy friar who had aided him to advocate his theory before the board of learned men at Salamanca, and had assisted him with his purse when making his proposals to the Spanish court. He had just been promoted and made archbishop of Seville, but had not yet been installed in his new office. Columbus directs his son Diego to entrust his interests to this worthy prelate. "Two things," says he, "require particular attention. Ascertain whether the queen, who is now with God, has said any thing concerning me in her testament, and stimulate the bishop of Palentia; he who was the cause that their highnesses obtained possession of the Indies, who induced me to remain in Castile when I was on the road to leave it\*." In another letter he says, "If the bishop of Palentia has arrived, or should arrive, tell him how much I have been

\* Letter of December 21, 1504, Navarrete, t. i. p. 346.

gratified by his prosperity, and that if I come, I shall lodge with his grace, even though he should not invite me, for we must return to our ancient fraternal affection.”

The incessant applications of Columbus, both by letter and by the intervention of friends, appear to have been listened to with cool indifference. No compliance was yielded to his requests, and no deference was paid to his opinions, on various points, concerning which he interested himself. New instructions were sent out to Ovando, but not a word of their purport was mentioned to the admiral. It was proposed to send out three bishops, and he entreated in vain to be heard previous to their election. In short, he was not in any way consulted in the affairs of the New World. He felt deeply this neglect, and became every day more impatient of his absence from court. To enable himself to perform the journey with more ease, he applied for permission to use a mule, a royal ordinance having prohibited the employment of those animals under the saddle, in consequence of their universal use having occasioned a decline in the breed of horses.

A royal permission was accordingly granted to Columbus, in consideration that his age and infirmities incapacitated him from riding on horseback; but it was a considerable time before the state of his health would permit him to avail himself of that privilege.

The foregoing particulars, gleaned from letters of Columbus, recently discovered, show the real state of his affairs, and the mental and bodily affliction he sustained during his winter's residence at Seville, on his return from his last disastrous voyage. He has generally been represented as reposing there from his toils and troubles. Never was honourable repose more merited, more desired, and less enjoyed.

It was not until the month of May that the admiral was able, in company with his brother the adelantado, to accomplish his journey to court, which was at that time held at Segovia. He, who but a few years before had entered the city of Barcelona in triumph, attended by the nobility and chivalry of Spain, and hailed with rapture by the multitude, now arrived within the gates of Segovia, a wayworn, melancholy, and neglected

man; oppressed more by sorrow than even by his years and infirmities. When he presented himself at court, he met with none of that distinguished attention, that cordial kindness, that cherishing sympathy, which his unparalleled services and his recent sufferings had merited\*.

The selfish Ferdinand had lost sight of all his past services, in what appeared to him the inconvenience of his present demands. He received him with many professions of kindness; but with those cold ineffectual smiles, which pass like wintry sunshine over the countenance, and convey no warmth to the heart. The admiral now gave a particular account of his late voyage; describing the great tract of terra firma, which he had explored, and the riches of the province of Veragua. He related also the disasters he had sustained in the island of Jamaica; the insurrection of the Porras and their band; and all the other griefs and troubles of this unfortunate expedition. He had but a cold-hearted auditor in the king; and the benignant Isabella was no more at hand to

\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. l. ii. c. 37. Herrera, H. Ind. D. l. l. vi. c. 13.

soothe him with a smile of kindness, or a tear of sympathy. "I know not," says the venerable Las Casas, "what could cause this dislike and this want of princely countenance in the king, towards one who had rendered him such preeminent benefits; unless it was that his mind was swayed by the false testimonies which had been brought against the admiral; of which I have been enabled to learn something from persons much in favour with the sovereign\*."

After a few days had elapsed, Columbus urged his suit in form; reminding the king of all that he had done, and all that had been promised him under the royal word and seal, and supplicating that the restitutions and indemnifications which had been so frequently solicited, might be awarded to him; offering in return to serve his majesty devotedly for the short time he had yet to live; and trusting, from what he felt within him, and from what he thought he knew with certainty, to render services which should surpass all that he had yet performed a hundredfold. The king, in reply, acknowledged the greatness of his merits,

\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. l. ii. c. 37, MS.

and observed, that the matters in question should be left to the decision of some discreet and able person. The admiral agreed, and proposed as arbiter the archbishop of Seville, Don Diego de Deza, who had always taken great interest in the affairs of the New World. The king consented to his arbitration ; but the admiral observed, that it was only the question of revenues and rents which he was willing to submit to the decision of learned men, not the question of the government of the Indies. “ By which I understand,” says Las Casas, “ that he did not think it necessary to put the latter point in dispute, his right to it being too clearly manifest.” In fact, it was on the subject of his dignities that Columbus was peculiarly tenacious ; all other matters he considered as of minor importance. In a conversation with the king, he declared that he had no desire to enter into any process or pleading. He was willing to put all his privileges and writings into the hands of the king, and to receive out of the dues arising from them whatever his majesty thought proper. He prayed only that the matter might be speedily decided ; that he might retire to some quiet

corner; and seek that repose which his great fatigues and infirmities required. Ferdinand, however, replied with mere compliments, and general evasive promises. "As far as actions went," observes Las Casas, "the king not merely showed him no signs of favour, but, on the contrary, discountenanced him as much as possible; yet he was never wanting in complimentary expressions."

Many months were passed by Columbus in unavailing attendance upon the court. He continued to receive outward demonstrations of respect from the king, and was noticed with due attention by the cardinal Ximenes, archbishop of Toledo, and other principal personages; but he had learned to appreciate and distrust the hollow civilities of a court. His claims were referred to a tribunal, called "The council of the discharges of the conscience of the deceased queen, and of the king." This is a kind of tribunal, commonly known by the name of the *Junta de Descargos*, composed of persons nominated by the sovereign, to superintend the accomplishment of the last will of his predecessor, and the discharge of his debts.

Two consultations were held by this body, but



nothing was determined. The wishes of the king were too well known to be thwarted. "It was believed," says Las Casas, "that if the king could have done so with a safe conscience, and without detriment to his fame, he would have respected few or none of the privileges which he and the queen had conceded to the admiral, and which had been so justly merited \*."

Columbus still flattered himself that his claims being of such importance, and touching a question of sovereignty, the adjustment of them might be only postponed by the king until he could consult with his daughter Juana, who had succeeded to her mother as queen of Castile, and who was daily expected from Flanders, with her husband, king Philip. He endeavoured, therefore, to bear his delays with patience; but he had no longer the physical strength to contend with difficulties, and the glorious anticipations to bear him above mortifications, which had once sustained him through his long application at this court. Life itself was drawing to a close.

He was once more confined to his bed by a

\* Las Casas, *Hist. Ind.* l. ii. c. 37.



tormenting attack of the gout, aggravated by the sorrows and disappointments which preyed upon his heart. From this couch of anguish he addressed one more appeal to the justice of the king. He no longer petitioned for himself: it was for his son Diego that he interceded. Nor did he dwell upon his pecuniary dues; it was the honourable trophies of his services, which he wished to secure and perpetuate in his family. He entreated that his son Diego might be appointed, in his place, to the government of which he had been so wrongfully deprived. "This," he said, "is a matter which concerns my honour; as to all the rest, do as your majesty thinks proper; give or withhold, as may be most for your interest, and I shall be content. I believe it is the anxiety caused by the delay of this affair which is the principal cause of my ill health." A petition to the same purpose was presented at the same time by his son Diego, offering to take with him such persons for counsellors as the king should appoint, and to be guided by their advice.

These petitions were treated by Ferdinand with his usual professions and evasions. "The more

applications were made to him," observes Las Casas, "the more favourably did he reply; but still he delayed, hoping, by exhausting their patience, to induce them to wave their privileges, and accept in place thereof titles and estates in Castile." Columbus rejected all propositions of the kind with indignation, as calculated to compromise those titles which were the trophies of his achievements. He saw, however, that all further hope of redress from Ferdinand was vain. From the bed to which he was confined, he addressed a letter to his constant friend Diego de Deza, expressive of his despair. "It appears that his majesty does not think fit to fulfil that which he, with the queen, who is now in glory, has promised me by word and seal. For me to contend for the contrary, would be to contend with the wind. I have done all that I could do. I leave the rest to God, whom I have ever found propitious to me in my necessities \*."

The cold and calculating Ferdinand beheld this illustrious man sinking under infirmity of body, heightened by that deferred hope which "maketh

\* Navarrete Collec. T. I.

the heart sick." A little more delay, a little more disappointment, and a little more infliction of ingratitude, and this loyal and generous heart would cease to beat: he should then be delivered from the just claims of a well tried servant, who, in ceasing to be useful, was considered by him to have become importunate.

## CHAPTER IV.

## DEATH OF COLUMBUS.

IN the midst of illness and despondency, when both life and hope were expiring in the bosom of Columbus, a new gleam was awakened and blazed up for the moment with characteristic fervour. He heard with joy of the landing of king Philip and queen Juana, who had just arrived from Flanders to take possession of their throne of Castile. In the daughter of Isabella he trusted once more to find a patroness and a friend. King Ferdinand and all the court repaired to Loredó to receive the youthful sovereigns. Columbus would gladly have done the same, but he was confined to his bed by a severe return of his malady; neither could he dispense with the aid and ministry of his son Diego, in his painful and helpless situation. His brother, the adelantado, therefore, his main dependence in all emergencies, was sent to represent him, and to present his homage

and congratulations. Columbus wrote by him to the new king and queen, expressing his grief at being prevented by illness from coming in person to manifest his devotion, but begging to be considered among the most faithful of their subjects. He expressed a hope that he should receive at their hands the restitution of his honours and estates, and assured them, that, though cruelly tortured at present by disease, he should yet be able to render them services, the like of which had never been witnessed.

Such was the last sally of his sanguine and unconquerable spirit ; which, disregarding age and infirmities, and all past sorrows and disappointments, spoke from his dying bed with all the confidence of youthful hope ; and talked of still greater enterprizes, as if he had a long and vigorous life before him. The adelantado took leave of his brother, whom he was never to behold again, and set out on his mission to the new sovereigns. He experienced the most gracious reception. The claims of the admiral were treated with great attention by the young king and queen, and flattering

hopes were given of a speedy and prosperous termination to his suit.

In the mean time the cares and troubles of Columbus were drawing to a close. The momentary fire which had recently reanimated him soon expired, quenched by his accumulating infirmities. Immediately after the departure of the adelantado, his illness increased in violence. His last voyage had shattered beyond repair a frame already worn and wasted by a life of hardship; and, since his return, a series of anxieties had robbed him of that sweet repose so necessary to recruit the weariness and debility of age. The cold ingratitude of his sovereign had chilled his heart. The continued suspension of his honours, and the enmity and defamation he experienced at every turn, seemed to have thrown a deep shadow over that glory which had been the great object of his ambition. This shadow, it is true, could be but of transient duration; but it is difficult for the most illustrious man to look beyond the present cloud which may obscure his fame, and anticipate its permanent lustre in the admiration of posterity.

Being admonished by his failing strength and his increasing sufferings that his end was approaching, he prepared to leave his affairs in order for the benefit of his successors.

It is said that on the 4th of May he wrote an informal testamentary codicil on the blank page of a little breviary, which had been given him by Pope Alexander VI. In this he bequeathed that book to the republic of Genoa, which he also appointed successor to his privileges and dignities, on the extinction of his male line. He directed likewise the erection of an hospital in that city with the produce of his possessions in Italy. The authenticity of this document is questioned, and has become a point of warm contest among commentators. It is not, however, of much importance. The paper is such as might readily have been written by a person like Columbus in the paroxysm of disease, when he imagined his end suddenly approaching, and shows the affection with which his thoughts were bent on his native city. It is termed among commentators a military codicil, because testamentary dispositions of this kind are executed by the soldier at the point of death, without the usual formalities



required by the civil law. About two weeks after, on the eve of his death, he executed a final and regularly authenticated codicil, in which he bequeathed his dignities and estates with better judgment.

In these last and awful moments, when the soul has but a brief space in which to make up its accounts between heaven and earth, all dissimulation is at an end, and we read the most unequivocal evidences of the character. The last codicil of Columbus, made at the very verge of the grave, is stamped with his ruling passion and his benignant virtues. He repeats and enforces several clauses of his original testament, constituting his son Diego his universal heir. The entailed inheritance, or *mayorazgo*, in case he died without male issue, was to go to his brother Don Fernando, and from him, in like case, to pass to his uncle Don Bartholomew, descending always to the nearest male heir; in failure of which it was to pass to the female nearest in lineage to the admiral. He enjoined upon whoever should inherit his estate never to alienate or diminish it, but to endeavour by all means to augment its



prosperity and importance. He likewise enjoined upon his heirs to be prompt and devoted at all times, with person and estate, to serve their sovereign and promote the Christian faith. He ordered that Don Diego should devote one-tenth of the revenues which might arise from his estate, when it came to be productive, to the relief of indigent relatives and of other persons in necessity; that, out of the remainder, he should yield certain yearly proportions to his brother Don Fernando, and his uncles Don Bartholomew and Don Diego; and that the part allotted to Don Fernando should be settled upon him and his male heirs in an entailed and unalienable inheritance. Having thus provided for the maintenance and perpetuity of his family and dignities, he ordered that Don Diego, when his estates should be sufficiently productive, should erect a chapel in the island of Hispaniola, which God had given to him so marvellously, at the town of Conception, in the Vega, where masses should be daily performed for the repose of the souls of himself, his father, his mother, his wife, and of all who died in the faith. Another clause recommends to the care of Don

Diego, Beatrix Enriquez, the mother of his natural son Fernando. His connexion with her had never been sanctioned by matrimony, and either this circumstance, or some neglect of her, seems to have awakened deep compunction in his dying moments. He orders Don Diego to provide for her respectable maintenance; "and let this be done," he adds, "for the discharge of my conscience, for it weighs heavy on my soul\*." Finally, he noted with his own hand several minute sums, to be paid to persons at different and distant places, without their being told from whence they received them. These appear to have been trivial debts of conscience, or rewards for petty services received in times long past. Among them is one of half a mark of silver to a poor Jew, who lived at the gate of the Jewry, in the city of Lisbon. These minute provisions evince the scrupulous attention to justice in all his dealings, and that love of

\* Diego, the son of the admiral, notes in his own testament this bequest of his father, and says, that he was charged by him to pay Beatrix Enriquez 10,000 maravedises a-year, which for some time he had faithfully performed; but as he believes that for three or four years previous to her death he neglected to do so, he orders that the deficiency shall be ascertained and paid to her heirs. Memorial ajustado sobre la propiedad del mayorazgo que fundo D. Christ. Colom. § 245.

punctuality in the fulfilment of duties, for which he was remarked. In the same spirit, he gave much advice to his son Diego, as to the conduct of his affairs, enjoining upon him to take every month an account with his own hand of the expenses of his household, and to sign it with his name; for a want of regularity in this, he observed, lost both property and servants, and turned the last into enemies\*. His dying bequests were made in presence of a few faithful followers and servants, and among them we find the name of Bartholomeo Fiesco, who had accompanied Diego Mendez in the perilous voyage in a canoe from Jamaica to Hispaniola.

Having thus scrupulously attended to all the claims of affection, loyalty, and justice upon earth, Columbus turned his thoughts to heaven; and having received the holy sacrament, and performed all the pious offices of a devout Christian, he expired with great resignation, on the day of ascension, the 20th of May, 1506, being about seventy years of age†. His last words were, “ *In manus tuas,*

\* Memorial ajustado, § 248.

† Cura de los Palacios, cap. 121.

*Domine, commendo spiritum meum :*” Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit \*.

His body was deposited in the convent of St. Francisco, and his obsequies were celebrated with funereal pomp in the parochial church of Santa Maria de la Antigua de Valladolid. His remains were transported afterwards, in 1513, to the Carthusian monastery of Las Cuevas of Seville, to the chapel of St. Ann or of Santo Christo, in which chapel were likewise deposited those of his son Don Diego, who died in the village of Montalban, on the 23d of February, 1526. In the year 1536 the bodies of Columbus and his son Diego were removed to Hispaniola, and interred in the principal chapel of the cathedral of the city of St. Domingo ; but even here they did not rest in quiet, having since been again disinterred and conveyed to the Havanna, in the island of Cuba.

A cheap honour was decreed to Columbus by Ferdinand after his death. He ordered a monument to be erected to his memory with this inscription :

\* Las Casas, Hist. Ind. l. 2. c. 38. Hist. del Almirante, cap. 103.

POR CASTILLA Y POR LEON  
NUEVO MUNDO HALLO COLON.

*For Castile and Leon Columbus found a New World.*

A record of the great debt of gratitude due to the discoverer, which the monarch had so faithlessly neglected to discharge. Attempts have been made, in recent days, by loyal Spanish writers, to vindicate the conduct of Ferdinand towards Columbus. They were doubtless well intended, but they have been futile, nor is their failure to be regretted. To screen such injustice in so eminent a character from the reprobation of mankind, is to deprive history of one of its most important uses. Let the ingratitude of Ferdinand stand recorded in its full extent, and endure throughout all time. The dark shadow which it casts upon his brilliant renown, will be a lesson to all rulers, teaching them what is important to their own fame in their treatment of illustrious men.

## CHAPTER V.

## OBSERVATIONS ON THE CHARACTER OF COLUMBUS.

IN narrating the history of Columbus, it has been the endeavour of the author to place him in a clear and familiar point of view, detailing actions, however trivial, which appeared to develop his character; and seeking, by collateral illustrations, to throw light upon his views and motives. Many circumstances have been detailed which may be deemed gross errors of conduct, and which may have hitherto either been passed over in silence, or vaguely noticed by historians; but he who paints a great man merely in great and heroic traits, though he may produce a fine picture, will never present a faithful portrait. Distinguished men are composed of great and little qualities. Much of their greatness arises from their struggles against the imperfections of their nature, and their noblest actions are sometimes struck forth by the collision of their virtues and their foibles.

Columbus was a man of great and inventive

genius. The operations of his mind were energetic, but irregular ; bursting forth at times with that irresistible force which characterises intellects of such an order. His mind had grasped all kinds of knowledge connected with his pursuits ; and though his information may appear limited at the present day, and some of his errors palpable, it is because that knowledge, in his peculiar department of science, was but scantily developed in his time. His own discoveries enlightened the ignorance of that age ; guided conjecture to certainty ; and dispelled numerous errors with which he himself had been obliged to struggle.

His ambition was lofty and noble. He was full of high thoughts, and anxious to distinguish himself by great achievements. It has been said that a mercenary feeling mingled with his views, and that his stipulations with the Spanish court were selfish and avaricious. The charge is inconsiderate and unjust. He aimed at dignity and wealth in the same lofty spirit in which he sought renown ; but they were to arise from the territories he should discover, and be commensurate in importance. No condition could



be more just. He asked nothing of the sovereigns but a command of the countries he hoped to give them, and a share of the profits to support the dignity of his command. If there should be no country discovered, his stipulated viceroyalty would be of no avail; and if no revenues should be produced, his labour and peril would produce no gain. If his command and revenues ultimately proved magnificent, it was from the magnificence of the regions he had attached to the Castilian crown. What monarch would not rejoice to gain empire on such conditions? But he did not merely risk a loss of labour, and a disappointment of ambition, in the enterprise;—on his motives being questioned, he voluntarily undertook, and, with the assistance of his coadjutors, actually defrayed one-eighth of the whole charge of the first expedition.

The gains that promised to arise from his discoveries, he intended to appropriate in the same princely and pious spirit in which they were demanded. He contemplated works and achievements of benevolence and religion: vast contributions for the relief of the poor of his native



city ; the foundations of churches, where masses should be said for the souls of the departed ; and armies for the recovery of the holy sepulchre in Palestine.

In the discharge of his office he maintained the state and ceremonial of a viceroy, and was tenacious of his rank and privileges ; not from a mere vulgar love of titles, but because he prized them as testimonials and trophies of his achievements : these he jealously cherished as his great rewards. In his repeated applications to the king, he insisted merely on the restitution of his dignities. As to his pecuniary dues, he would leave them to arbitration, or even to the disposition of the king ; “ but these things,” said he, nobly, “ affect my honour.” In his testament, he enjoined on his son Diego, and whoever after him should inherit his estates, whatever dignities and titles might afterwards be granted by the king, always to sign himself simply “ the admiral,” by way of perpetuating in the family its real source of greatness.

His conduct was characterised by the grandeur of his views, and the magnanimity of his spirit.

Instead of traversing the newly found countries, like a grasping adventurer eager only for immediate gain, as was too generally the case with contemporary discoverers, he sought to ascertain their soil and productions, their rivers and harbours : he was desirous of colonising and cultivating them ; of conciliating and civilising the natives ; of building cities, introducing the useful arts, subjecting every thing to the control of law, order, and religion ; and thus of founding regular and prosperous empires. In this glorious plan he was constantly defeated by the dissolute rabble which it was his misfortune to command ; with whom all law was tyranny, and all order restraint. They interrupted all useful works by their seditions ; provoked the peaceful Indians to hostility ; and after they had thus heaped misery and warfare upon their own heads, and overwhelmed Columbus with the ruins of the edifice he was building, they charged him with being the cause of the confusion.

Well would it have been for Spain had those who followed in the track of Columbus possessed his sound policy and liberal views. The New

World, in such case, would have been settled by pacific colonists, and civilised by enlightened legislators ; instead of being overrun by desperate adventurers, and desolated by avaricious conquerors.

Columbus was a man of quick sensibility, liable to great excitement, to sudden and strong impressions, and powerful impulses. He was naturally irritable and impetuous, and keenly sensible to injury and injustice ; yet the quickness of his temper was counteracted by the benevolence and generosity of his heart. The magnanimity of his nature shone forth through all the troubles of his stormy career. Though continually outraged in his dignity, and braved in the exercise of his command ; though foiled in his plans, and endangered in his person by the seditions of turbulent and worthless men, and that too at times when suffering under anxiety of mind and anguish of body sufficient to exasperate the most patient, he restrained his valiant and indignant spirit, and, by the strong powers of his mind, brought himself to forbear, and reason, and even to supplicate : nor should we fail to notice how free he was from all feeling of revenge, how ready to forgive and

forget, on the least signs of repentance and atonement. He has been extolled for his skill in controlling others ; but far greater praise is due to him for the firmness he displayed in governing himself.

His natural benignity made him accessible to all kinds of pleasurable sensations from external objects. In his letters and journals, instead of detailing circumstances with the technical precision of a mere navigator, he notices the beauties of nature with the enthusiasm of a poet or a painter. As he coasts the shores of the New World, the reader participates in the enjoyment with which he describes, in his imperfect but picturesque Spanish, the varied objects around him ; the blandness of the temperature, the purity of the atmosphere, the fragrance of the air, “ full of dew and sweetness,” the verdure of the forests, the magnificence of the trees, the grandeur of the mountains, and the limpidity and freshness of the running streams. New delight springs up for him in every scene. He proclaims that each new discovery is more beautiful than the last, and each the most beautiful in the world ; until, with his simple earnestness, he tells

the sovereigns, that, having spoken so highly of the preceding islands, he fears that they will not credit him, when he declares that the one he is actually describing surpasses them all in excellence.

In the same ardent and unstudied way he expresses his emotions on various occasions, readily affected by impulses of joy or grief, of pleasure or indignation. When surrounded and overwhelmed by the ingratitude and violence of worthless men, he often, in the retirement of his cabin, gave way to bursts of sorrow, and relieved his overladen heart by sighs and groans. When he returned in chains to Spain, and came into the presence of Isabella, instead of continuing the lofty pride with which he had hitherto sustained his injuries, he was touched with grief and tenderness at her sympathy, and burst forth into sobs and tears.

He was devoutly pious, religion mingled with the whole course of his thoughts and actions, and shines forth in all his most private and unstudied writings. Whenever he made any great discovery, he celebrated it by solemn thanks to God. The voice of prayer and melody of praise rose

from his ships when they first beheld the New World, and his first action on landing was to prostrate himself upon the earth and return thanksgivings. Every evening, the *Salve Regina*, and other vesper hymns, were chanted by his crew, and masses were performed in the beautiful groves that bordered the wild shores of this heathen land. The religion thus deeply seated in his soul, diffused a sober dignity and a benign composure over his whole demeanour. His language was pure and guarded, free from all imprecations, oaths, and other irreverent expressions. All his great enterprises were undertaken in the name of the Holy Trinity, and he partook of the holy sacrament previous to embarkation. He observed the festivals of the church in the wildest situations. The sabbath was with him a day of sacred rest, on which he would never set sail from a port unless in case of extreme necessity. He was a firm believer in the efficacy of vows and penances and pilgrimages, and resorted to them in times of difficulty and danger; but he carried his religion still further, and his piety was darkened by the bigotry of the age. He evidently concurred in the opinion

that all the nations who did not acknowledge the Christian faith were destitute of natural rights ; that the sternest measures might be used for their conversion, and the severest punishments inflicted upon their obstinacy in unbelief. In this spirit of bigotry he considered himself justified in making captives of the Indians, and transporting them to Spain to have them taught the doctrines of Christianity, and in selling them for slaves if they pretended to resist his invasions. In doing the latter, he sinned against the natural goodness of his character, and against the feelings which he had originally entertained and expressed towards this gentle and hospitable people ; but he was goaded on by the mercenary impatience of the crown, and by the sneers of his enemies at the unprofitable result of his enterprizes. It is but justice to his character to observe, that the enslavement of the Indians thus taken in battle was at first openly countenanced by the crown, and that, when the question of right came to be discussed at the entreaty of the queen, several of the most distinguished jurists and theologians advocated the practice ; so that the question was finally settled



in favour of the Indians solely by the humanity of Isabella. As the venerable bishop Las Casas observes, where the most learned men have doubted, it is not surprising that an unlearned mariner should err.

These remarks, in palliation of the conduct of Columbus, are required by candour. It is proper to show him in connexion with the age in which he lived, lest the errors of the times should be considered as his individual faults. It is not the intention of the author, however, to justify Columbus on a point where it is inexcusable to err. Let it remain a blot on his illustrious name, and let others derive a lesson from it.

A peculiar trait in his rich and varied character remains to be noticed—that ardent and enthusiastic imagination which threw a magnificence over his whole course of thought. Herrera intimates that he had a talent for poetry, and some slight traces of it are on record in the book of prophecies which he presented to the catholic sovereigns. But his poetical temperament is discernible throughout all his writings and in all his actions. It spread a golden and glorious world



around him, and tinged every thing with its own gorgeous colours. It betrayed him into visionary speculations, which subjected him to the sneers and cavillings of men of cooler and safer, but more groveling minds. Such were the conjectures formed on the coast of Paria about the form of the earth, and the situation of the terrestrial paradise ; about the mines of Ophir in Hispaniola, and the Aurea Chersonesus in Veragua ; and such was the heroic scheme of a crusade for the recovery of the holy sepulchre. It mingled with his religion, and filled his mind with solemn and visionary meditations on mystic passages of the scriptures, and the shadowy portents of the prophecies. It exalted his office in his eyes, and made him conceive himself an agent sent forth upon a sublime and awful mission, subject to impulses and supernatural intimations from the Deity ; such as the voice which he imagined spoke to him in comfort amidst the troubles of Hispaniola, and in the silence of the night on the disastrous coast of Veragua.

He was decidedly a visionary, but a visionary of an uncommon and successful kind. The manner

in which his ardent imagination and mercurial nature was controlled by a powerful judgment, and directed by an acute sagacity, is the most extraordinary feature in his character. Thus governed, his imagination, instead of exhausting itself in idle flights, lent aid to his judgment, and enabled him to form conclusions at which common minds could never have arrived, nay, which they could not perceive when pointed out.

To his intellectual vision it was given to read the signs of the times, and to trace, in the conjectures and reveries of past ages, the indications of an unknown world ; as soothsayers were said to read predictions in the stars, and to foretell events from the visions of the night. “ His soul,” observes a Spanish writer, “ was superior to the age in which he lived. For him was reserved the great enterprise of traversing that sea which had given rise to so many fables, and of deciphering the mystery of his age \*.”

With all the visionary fervour of his imagination, its fondest dreams fell short of the reality.

\* Cladera. Investigaciones historicas, p. 43.

He died in ignorance of the real grandeur of his discovery. Until his last breath he entertained the idea that he had merely opened a new way to the old resorts of opulent commerce, and had discovered some of the wild regions of the east. He supposed Hispaniola to be the ancient Ophir which had been visited by the ships of Solomon, and that Cuba and Terra Firma were but remote parts of Asia. What visions of glory would have broke upon his mind could he have known that he had indeed discovered a new continent, equal to the whole of the old world in magnitude, and separated by two vast oceans from all the earth hitherto known by civilised man ! And how would his magnanimous spirit have been consoled, amidst the afflictions of age and the cares of penury, the neglect of a fickle public, and the injustice of an ungrateful king, could he have anticipated the splendid empires which were to spread over the beautiful world he had discovered ; and the nations, and tongues, and languages which were to fill its lands with his renown, and to revere and bless his name to the latest posterity !



# APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

ILLUSTRATIONS AND DOCUMENTS.



TRANSPORTATION OF THE REMAINS OF COLUMBUS  
FROM ST. DOMINGO TO THE HAVANNA.

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AT the termination of a war between France and Spain, in 1795, all the Spanish possessions in the island of Hispaniola were ceded to the French crown by the ninth article of the treaty of peace. To assist in the accomplishment of this cession, a Spanish squadron was despatched to the island at the appointed time, commanded by Don Gabriel de Aristizabal, lieutenant-general of the royal armada. On the 11th December, 1795, that commander wrote to the field-marshal and governor, Don Joaquin Garcia, resident at St. Domingo, that, being informed that the remains of the celebrated admiral Don Christopher Columbus lay in the cathedral of that city, he felt it incumbent on him, as a Spaniard, and as commander in chief of his majesty's squadron of operations, to solicit the removal of the mortal remains of that

hero to the island of Cuba, which had likewise been discovered by him, and where he had first planted the standard of the cross. He expressed a desire that this should be done officially, and with great care and formality, that it might not remain in the power of any one, by carelessness or negligence, to lose a relique connected with an event which formed the most glorious epoch of Spanish history; and that it might be manifested to all nations that Spaniards, notwithstanding the lapse of ages, never ceased to pay all honours to the memory of that “worthy and adventurous general of the seas;” nor abandoned them when the various public bodies representing the Spanish dominion emigrated from the island. As he had not time, without great inconvenience, to consult the sovereign on this subject, he had recourse to the governor, as royal vice-patron of the island, hoping that his solicitation might be granted, and the remains of the admiral exhumed, and conveyed to the island of Cuba, in the ship *San Lorenzo*.

The generous wishes of this high-minded Spaniard met with warm concurrence on the part of the governor. He informed him, in reply,



that the duke of Veraguas, lineal successor of Columbus, had manifested the same solicitude, and had sent directions that the necessary measures should be taken at his expense; and had, at the same time, expressed a wish that the bones of the adelantado, Don Bartholomew Columbus, should likewise be exhumed—transmitting inscriptions to be put upon the sepulchres of both. He added, that although the king had given no orders on the subject, yet the proposition being so accordant with the grateful feelings of the Spanish nation, and meeting with the concurrence of all the authorities of the island, he was ready, on his part, to carry it into execution.

The commandant-general, Aristizabal, then made a similar communication to the archbishop of Cuba, Don Fernando Portillo y Torres, whose metropolis was then the city of St. Domingo, hoping to receive his countenance and aid in this pious undertaking.

The reply of the archbishop was couched in terms of high courtesy towards the gallant commander, and deep reverence for the memory of Columbus, and expressed a zeal in rendering this

tribute of gratitude and respect to the remains of one who had done so much for the glory of the nation.

The persons empowered to act for the duke of Veraguas, the venerable dean and chapter of the cathedral, and all the other persons and authorities to whom Don Gabriel de Aristizabal made similar communications, manifested the same eagerness to assist in the performance of this solemn and affecting rite.

The worthy commander, Aristizabal, having taken all these preparatory steps with great form and punctilio, so as that the ceremony should be performed in a public and striking manner, suitable to the fame of Columbus, the whole was carried into effect with becoming pomp and solemnity.

On the 20th of December, 1795, the most distinguished persons of the place, the dignitaries of the church, and civil and military officers, assembled in the metropolitan cathedral. In the presence of this august assemblage a small vault was opened above the chancel, in the principal wall on the right side of the high altar : within were found the fragments of a leaden coffin,

a number of bones, and a quantity of mould, evidently the remains of a human body. These were carefully collected and put into a case of gilded lead, about half an ell in length and breadth, and a third in height, secured by an iron lock, the key of which was delivered to the archbishop. The case was enclosed in a coffin covered with black velvet, and ornamented with lace and fringe of gold. The whole was then placed in a temporary tomb or mausoleum.

On the following day there was another grand commemoration at the cathedral, when the vigils and masses for the dead were solemnly chanted by the archbishop, accompanied by the commandant-general of the armada, the Dominican and Franciscan friars, and the friars of the Order of Mercy, together with the rest of the distinguished assemblage. After this a funeral sermon was preached by the archbishop.

On the same day, at four o'clock in the afternoon, the coffin was transported to the ship with the utmost state and ceremony, with a civil, religious, and military procession, banners covered with crape, chants and responses, and discharges

of artillery. The most distinguished persons of the several orders took turn to support the coffin. The key was taken, with great formality, from the hands of the archbishop, by the governor, and given into the hands of the commander of the Havanna, to be held in deposit until the pleasure of the king should be known. The coffin was received on board of a brigantine called the Discoverer, which, with all the other shipping, displayed mourning signals, and saluted the remains with the honours paid to an admiral.

From the port of St. Domingo the coffin was conveyed to the bay of Ocoa, and there transferred to the ship St. Lorenzo. It was accompanied by a portrait of Columbus, sent from Spain by the duke of Veraguas, to be suspended close by the place where the remains of his illustrious ancestor should be deposited.

The ship immediately made sail, and arrived at Havanna, in Cuba, on the 15th of January, 1796. Here the same deep feeling of reverence to the memory of the discoverer was evinced. The principal authorities repaired on board of the ship, accompanied by the superior naval and military

officers. Every thing was conducted with the same circumstantial and solemn ceremonial. The remains were removed with great reverence, and placed in a felucca, in which they were conveyed to land in the midst of a procession of three columns of feluccas and boats in the royal service, all properly decorated, containing distinguished military and ministerial officers. Two feluccas followed, in one of which was a marine guard of honour, with mourning banners and muffled drums; and in the other were the commandant-general, the principal minister of marine, and the military staff. In passing the vessels of war in the harbour, they all paid the honours due to an admiral and captain-general of the navy. On arriving at the mole, the remains were met by the governor of the island, accompanied by the generals and the military staff. The coffin was then conveyed between files of soldiery which lined the streets to the obelisk on the Parade, where it was received in a herse prepared for the purpose. Here the remains were formally delivered to the governor and captain-general of the island, the key given up to him, the coffin opened and examined, and the safe

transportation of its contents authenticated. This ceremony being concluded, it was conveyed in grand procession, and with the utmost pomp, to the cathedral. Masses, and the solemn ceremonies of the dead, were performed by the bishop, and the mortal remains of Columbus deposited with great reverence in the wall, on the right side of the grand altar. “ All these honours and ceremonies,” says the document from whence this account is taken \*, “ were attended by the ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries, the public bodies, and all the nobility and gentry of Havanna, in proof of the high estimation and respectful remembrance in which they held the hero who had discovered the New World, and had been the first to plant the standard of the cross on that island.”

This is the last occasion that the Spanish nation has had to testify its feelings towards the memory of Columbus ; and it is with deep satisfaction that the author of this work has been able to cite at large a ceremonial so solemn, affecting, and noble in its details, and so honourable to the national character. When we read of the remains of

\* Navarrete Collec. t. 2. p. 365.

Columbus, thus conveyed from the port of St. Domingo, after an interval of nearly three hundred years, as sacred national reliques, with civil and military pomp and high religious ceremonial, the most dignified and illustrious men striving who most should pay them reverence, we cannot but reflect that it was from this very port he was carried off loaded with ignominious chains, blasted apparently in fame and fortune, and followed by the revilings of the rabble. Such honours, it is true, are nothing to the dead, nor can they atone to the heart, now dust and ashes, for all the wrongs and sorrows it may have suffered ; but they speak volumes of comfort to the illustrious yet slandered and persecuted living, encouraging them bravely to bear with present injuries, by showing them how true merit outlives all calumny, and receives its glorious reward in the admiration of after ages.





No. II.

ACCOUNT OF THE DESCENDANTS OF COLUMBUS.

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ON the death of Columbus, his son Diego succeeded to his rights, as viceroy and governor of the New World, according to the express capitulations between the sovereigns and his father. He appears, by the general consent of historians, to have been a man of great integrity, of respectable talents, and of a frank and generous nature. Herrera speaks repeatedly of the gentleness and urbanity of his manners, and pronounces him of a noble disposition and without deceit. This absence of all guile frequently exposed him to the stratagems of crafty men, grown old in deception, who rendered his life a continued series of embarrassments; but the probity of his character, with the irresistible power of truth, bore him through difficulties in which more politic and subtle men would have been entangled and completely lost.

Immediately after the death of the admiral, Don Diego came forward as lineal successor, and urged the restitution of the family offices and privileges, which had been suspended during the latter years of his father's life. If the cold and wary Ferdinand, however, could forget his obligations of gratitude and justice to Columbus, he had less difficulty in turning a deaf ear to the solicitations of his son. For two years Don Diego pressed his suit with fruitless diligence. He felt the apparent distrust of the monarch the more sensibly from having been brought up under his eye, as a page in the royal household, where his character ought to be well known and appreciated. At length, on the return of Ferdinand from Naples, in 1508, he put to him a direct question, with the frankness attributed to his character. He demanded "why his majesty would not grant to him as a favour, that which was his right, and why he hesitated to confide in the fidelity of one who had been reared in his house?" Ferdinand replied, that he could fully confide in himself, but that he could not repose so great a trust, at a venture, in his children and successors. To this Diego rejoined,

that it was contrary to all justice and reason to make him suffer for the sins of his children who never might be born.

Still, though he had reason and justice on his side, the young admiral found it impossible to bring the wary monarch to a compliance. Finding all appeal to his ideas of equity or sentiments of generosity in vain, he solicited permission to pursue his claim in the ordinary courts of law. The king could not refuse so reasonable a request, and Don Diego commenced a process against king Ferdinand before the council of the Indies, founded on the repeated capitulations between the crown and his father, and comprehending all the dignities and immunities ceded by them.

One ground of opposition to these claims was, that if the capitulation made by the sovereigns, in 1492, had granted a perpetual viceroyalty to the admiral and his heirs, such grant could not stand; being contrary to the interest of the state, and to an express law, promulgated in Toledo in 1480, wherein it was ordained that no office, involving the administration of justice, should be given in perpetuity; therefore that the viceroyalty granted to the admiral could only have been for his life;

and that, even during that term, it had justly been taken from him for his misconduct. That such concessions were contrary to the inherent prerogatives of the crown, of which the government could not divest itself. To this Don Diego replied, that as to the validity of the capitulation, it was a binding contract, and that none of its privileges ought to be restricted. That as by royal schedules, dated Villa Franca, June 2d, 1506, and Almazan, August 28th, 1507, it had been ordered that he, Don Diego, should receive the tenths, so equally ought the other privileges to be granted to him. As to the allegation that his father had been deprived of his viceroyalty for his demerits, it was contrary to all truth. It had been audacity on the part of Bobadilla to send him a prisoner to Spain, in 1500, and contrary to the will and command of the sovereigns, as was proved by their letter dated from Valentia de la Torre, in 1502; in which they expressed grief at his arrest, and assured him that it should be redressed, and his privileges preserved entire to himself and his children\*.

\* Extracts from the Minutes of the Process, taken by the historian Muños, MS.

This memorable suit was commenced in 1508, and continued for several years. In the course of it the claims of Don Diego were disputed, likewise, on the plea that his father was not the original discoverer of Terra Firma, but only subsequently, of certain portions of it. This however was completely controverted by overwhelming testimony. The claims of Don Diego were minutely discussed and rigidly examined, and the unanimous decision of the council of the Indies in his favour, while it reflected honour on the justice and independence of that body, silenced many petty cavillers at the fair fame of Columbus\*. Notwithstanding this decision, the wily monarch wanted neither means nor pretexts to delay the ceding of such vast powers, so repugnant to his cautious policy. The young admiral was finally indebted for his success in this suit to previous success obtained in a suit of a different nature. He had become enamoured of Donna Maria de Toledo, daughter of Ferdinando de Toledo, grand commander of Leon, and niece to Don Fadrique

\* Further mention will be found of this lawsuit in the article on Amerigo Vespucci.

de Toledo, the celebrated duke of Alva, chief favourite of the king. This was aspiring to a high connexion. The father and uncle of the lady were the most powerful grandees of the proud kingdom of Spain, and cousins german to Ferdinand. The glory, however, which Columbus had left behind rested upon his children, and his claims, recently confirmed by the council, involved dignities and wealth sufficient to raise Diego to a level with the loftiest alliance. He found no difficulty in obtaining the hand of the lady, and thus was the foreign family of Columbus engrafted on one of the proudest races of Spain. The natural consequences followed. Diego had secured that magical power called "connexions," and the favour of Ferdinand, which had so long been withheld from him as the son of Columbus, shone upon him, though coldly, as the nephew of the duke of Alva. The father and uncle of his bride succeeded, though with great difficulty, in conquering the repugnance of the monarch, and, after all, he but granted in part the justice they required. He ceded to Don Diego merely the dignities and powers enjoyed by Nicolas de Ovando, who was

recalled, and he cautiously withheld the title of viceroy.

The recall of Ovando was not merely a measure to make room for Don Diego, it was the tardy performance of a promise made to Isabella on her death-bed. The expiring queen had demanded it as a punishment for the massacre of her poor Indian subjects at Xaragua, and the cruel and ignominious execution of the female cacique Anacaona.

In complying with the request of the queen, however, Ferdinand was favourable towards Ovando. He did not feel the same generous sympathies with his late consort, and, however Ovando had sinned against humanity in his treatment of the Indians, he had been a vigilant officer, and his very oppressions had in general proved profitable to the crown. Ferdinand directed that the fleet which took out the new governor should return under the command of Ovando, and that he should retain undisturbed enjoyment of any property or Indian slaves that might be found in his possession. Some have represented Ovando as a man far from mercenary ; that the wealth wrung from the miseries of the natives was for his sovereign, not



himself; and it is intimated that one secret cause of his disgrace was his having made an enemy of the all-powerful and unforgiving Fonseca\*.

The new admiral embarked at San Lucar, June 9, 1509, with his wife, his brother Don Fernando, who was now grown to man's estate, and had been well educated, and his two uncles Don Bartholomew and Don Diego. They were accompanied by a numerous retinue of cavaliers, with their wives, and young ladies of rank and family, more distinguished, it is hinted, for high blood than large fortune, and who were sent out to find wealthy husbands in the New World†.

Though the king had not granted Don Diego the dignity of viceroy, the title was generally given to him by courtesy, and his wife was universally addressed by that of vicequeen.

Don Diego commenced his rule with a degree of splendour hitherto unknown in the colony. The vicequeen, who was a lady of great desert, surrounded by the noble cavaliers and the young ladies of family who had come in her retinue,

\* Charleroix, ut supra, c. v. i. p. 272, id. 274.

† Las Casas, l. ii. cap. 49. MS.



established a sort of court which threw a degree of lustre over the half savage island. The young ladies were soon married to the wealthiest colonists, and contributed greatly to soften those rude manners which had grown up in a state of society, destitute hitherto of the salutary restraint and pleasing decorum produced by female influence.

Don Diego had considered his appointment in the light of a viceroyalty, but the king soon took measures which showed that he admitted of no such pretension. Without any reference to Don Diego, he divided the isthmus of Darien into two great provinces, separated by an imaginary line running through the gulf of Uraba; appointing Alonzo de Ojeda governor of the eastern province, which he called New Andalusia; and a cavalier, named Diego de Nicuesa, governor of the western province, which included the rich coast of Veragua, and which he called Castilla del Oro, or Golden Castile. Had the monarch been swayed by principles of justice and gratitude, the settlement of this coast would have

been given to the adelantado Don Bartholomew Columbus, who had assisted in the discovery of the country, and, together with his brother the admiral, had suffered so greatly in the enterprize. Even his superior abilities for the task should have pointed him out to the policy of the monarch; but the cautious and calculating Ferdinand knew the lofty spirit of the adelantado, and that he would be disposed to demand high and dignified terms. He passed him by, therefore, and preferred more eager and accommodating adventurers.

Don Diego was greatly aggrieved at this measure thus adopted without his participation or knowledge. He justly considered it an infringement of the capitulations granted and repeatedly confirmed to his father and his heirs. He had further vexations and difficulties with respect to the government of the island of St. Juan or Porto Rico, which was conquered and settled about this time; but, after a variety of cross purposes, the officers whom he appointed were ultimately recognised by the crown.

Like his father, he had to contend with malignant

factions in his government ; for the enemies of the father transferred their enmity to the son. There was one Miguel Passamonte, the king's treasurer, who became his avowed enemy, under the support and chiefly at the instigation of the bishop Fonseca, who continued to the son the implacable hostility which he had manifested to the admiral. A variety of trivial circumstances contributed to embroil him with some of the petty officers of the colony ; and there was a remnant of the followers of Roldan who arrayed themselves against him\*.

Two factions soon arose in the island, one of the admiral, the other of the treasurer Passamonte. The latter affected to call themselves the party of the king. They gave all possible molestation to Don Diego, and sent home the most virulent and absurd misrepresentations of his conduct. Among others, they represented a large house with many windows, which he was building, as intended for a fortress, and asserted that he had a design to make himself sovereign of the island. King Ferdinand, who was now advanced in years, had de-

\* Herrera, Decad. I. l. vii. c. 12.

volved the affairs of the Indies in a great measure on Fonseca\*, who had superintended them from the first, and he was greatly guided by the advice of that prelate, which was not likely to be favourable to the descendants of Columbus. The complaints from the colonies were so artfully enforced therefore, that he established, in 1510, a sovereign court at St. Domingo, called the royal audience, to which an appeal might be made from all sentences of the admiral, even in cases reserved hitherto exclusively for the crown. Don Diego considered this a suspicious and injurious measure intended to demolish his authority.

Frank, open, and unsuspecting, the young admiral was not formed for a contest with the crafty politicians arrayed against him, who were ready and adroit in laying hold of his slightest errors, and magnifying them into crimes. Difficulties were multiplied in his path which it was out of his power to overcome. He had entered upon office full of magnanimous intentions, determined to put an end to oppression and correct all abuses ;

\* Herrera, Decad. I. l. vii. c. 12.

all good men, therefore, had rejoiced at his appointment ; but he soon found that he had overrated his strength, and undervalued the difficulties awaiting him. He calculated from his own good heart, but he had no idea of the wickedness of others. He opposed the “ repartimientos” of Indians, that source of all kinds of inhumanity ; but he found all the men of wealth in the colony, and most of the important persons of the court, interested in maintaining them. He perceived that the attempt to abolish them would be dangerous, and the result questionable : at the same time this injustice was a source of immense profit to himself. Self-interest, therefore, combined with other considerations, and what at first appeared difficult, seemed presently impracticable. The “ repartimientos” continued in the state in which he found them, excepting that he removed such of the superintendents as had been cruel and oppressive, and substituted men of his own appointment, who probably proved equally worthless. His friends were disappointed, his enemies encouraged ; a hue and cry was raised against him by the friends

of those he had displaced ; and it was even said that if Ovando had not died about this time, he would have been sent out to supplant Don Diego.

The subjugation and settlement of the island of Cuba in 1510, was a fortunate event in the administration of the present admiral. He congratulated king Ferdinand on having acquired the largest and most beautiful island in the world, without losing a single man. The intelligence was highly acceptable to the king ; but it was accompanied by a great number of complaints against the admiral. Little affection as Ferdinand felt for Don Diego, he was still aware that most of these representations were false, and had their origin in the jealousy and envy of his enemies. He judged it expedient, however, in 1512, to send out Don Bartholomew Columbus, with minute instructions to his nephew, the admiral.

Don Bartholomew still retained the office of adelantado of the Indies, although Ferdinand, through selfish motives, detained him in Spain, while he employed inferior men in voyages of discovery. He now added to his appointments

the property and government of the little island of Mona during life, and assigned him a repartimiento of two hundred Indians, with the superintendence of the mines which might be discovered in Cuba ; an office which proved very lucrative\*.

Among the instructions given by the king to Don Diego, he directed, that, in consequence of the representations of the Dominican friars, the labour of the natives should be reduced one third ; that negro slaves should be procured from Guinea as a relief to the Indians† ; and that Carib slaves should be branded on the leg to prevent other Indians from being confounded with them, and subjected to harsh treatment‡.

The two governors, Ojeda and Nicuessa, whom the king had appointed to colonize and command at the isthmus of Darien, in Terra Firma, having failed in their undertaking, the sovereign, in 1514, wrote to Hispaniola, permitting the adelantado, Don Bartholomew Columbus, if so inclined, to take charge of settling the coast of Veragua, and

\* Charleroix, Hist. St. Domingo, p. 331.

† Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. I. l. ix. c. 5.

‡ Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. I. l. ix. c. 5.



to govern that country under the admiral Don Diego, conformably to his privileges. Had the king consulted his own interest, and the deference due to the talent and services of the adelantado, this measure would have been taken at an earlier date. It was now too late : illness prevented Don Bartholomew from executing the enterprise, and his active and toilsome life was drawing to a close.

Many calumnies having been sent home to Spain by Passamonte and other enemies of Don Diego, and various measures being taken by government which he conceived derogatory to his dignity and injurious to his privileges, he requested and obtained permission to repair to court, that he might explain and vindicate his conduct. He departed accordingly on April 9th, 1515, leaving the adelantado with the vicequeen, Dona Maria. He was received with great honour by the king, and he merited such a reception. He had succeeded in every enterprise he had undertaken or directed. The pearl fishery had been successfully established on the coast of Cubagua ; the islands of Cuba and Jamaica had been subjected and brought under cultivation without



bloodshed ; his conduct as governor had been upright ; and he had only excited the representations made against him by endeavouring to lessen the oppression of the natives. The king ordered that all processes against him in the court of appeal and elsewhere, for damages done to individuals in regulating the repartimientos, should be discontinued, and the cases sent to himself for consideration. But with all these favours, as the admiral claimed a share of the profits of the provinces of Castilla del Oro, saying that it was discovered by his father, as the names of its places, such as Nombre de Dios, Porto Bello, and El Retrete, plainly proved, the king ordered that interrogatories should be made among the mariners who had sailed with Christopher Columbus, in the hope of proving that he had not discovered the coast of Darien, or the gulf of Uraba. “ Thus,” adds Herrera, “ Don Diego was always involved in litigations with the fiscal, so that he might truly say he was heir to the troubles of his father\*.”

Not long after the departure of Don Diego

\* Herrera, Decad. II. lib. i. c. 7.

from San Domingo, his uncle Bartholomew ended his active and laborious life. No particulars are given of his death, nor is there mention made of his age, which must have been great. King Ferdinand is said to have expressed great concern at the event, for he had a high opinion of the character and talents of the adelantado. "He was a man," says Herrera, "of not less worth than his brother the admiral, and who, if he had been employed, would have given great proofs of it, for he was an excellent seaman, valiant, and of a noble mind\*." Charleroix attributes the inaction in which Don Bartholomew had been suffered to remain for several years, to the jealousy and parsimony of the king. He found the family already too powerful; and the adelantado, had he discovered Mexico, was a man to make as good conditions as had been made by the admiral his brother†.

It was said, observes Herrera, that the king rather preferred to employ him in his European affairs, though it could only have been to divert

\* Herrera, Decad. I. lib. x. c. 16.

† Charleroix, Hist. St. Domingo, l. v.

him from other objects. On his death the king resumed the government of the island of Mona, which he had given to him for his life, and transferred his repartimiento of two hundred Indians to the vicequeen, Dona Maria.

While the admiral, Don Diego, was pressing for an audience in his vindication at court, king Ferdinand died, on the 23d of January, 1516. His grandson and successor, prince Charles, afterwards the emperor Charles V., was in Flanders. The government rested for a time with cardinal Ximenes, who would not undertake to decide on the representations and claims of the admiral. It was not until 1520, that he obtained from the emperor, Charles V., a recognition of his innocence of all the charges against him. The emperor, finding that what Passamonte and his party had written were notorious calumnies, ordered Don Diego to resume his charge, although the process with the fiscal was still pending, and that Passamonte should be written to, requesting him to forget all past vexations and differences, and to enter into amicable intercourse with Don Diego. Among other acts of indemnification, he acknow-

ledged his rights to exercise the office of viceroy and governor in the island of Hispaniola, and in all places discovered by his father\*. His authority was, however, much diminished by new regulations, and a supervisor appointed over him, with the right to give information to the council against him, but with no other powers. Don Diego sailed in the beginning of September, 1520, and on his arrival in St. Domingo, finding that several of the governors, presuming on his long absence, had arrogated to themselves independence, and had abused their powers, he immediately sent persons to supersede them, and demanded an account of their administration. This made him a host of active and powerful enemies, both in the colonies and in Spain.

Considerable changes had taken place in the island of Hispaniola during the absence of the admiral. The mines had fallen into neglect; the cultivation of the sugar cane having been found a more certain source of wealth. It became a by-word in Spain, that the magnificent palaces erected by Charles V. at Madrid and Toledo, were built

\* Herrera, Decad. 11. l. ix. c. 7.

of the sugar of Hispaniola. Slaves had been imported in great numbers from Africa, being found more serviceable in the culture of the cane than the feeble Indians. The treatment of the poor negroes was cruel in the extreme, and they seem to have had no advocates even among the humane. The slavery of the Indians had been founded on the right of the strong ; but it was thought that the negroes, from their colour, were born to slavery ; and that from being bought and sold in their own country, it was their natural condition. Though a patient and enduring race, the barbarities inflicted on them at length roused the negroes to revenge ; and on the 27th of December, 1522, there was the first African revolt in Hispaniola. It began in a sugar plantation of the admiral Don Diego, where about twenty slaves, joined by an equal number from a neighbouring plantation, got possession of arms, rose against their masters, massacred them, and sallied forth upon the country. It was their intention to pillage certain plantations, to kill the Spaniards, reinforce themselves by freeing their countrymen,

and either to possess themselves of the town of Agua, or to escape to the mountains.

When tidings were brought to Don Diego at St. Domingo of this revolt, he set out in search of the rebels, followed by several of the principal inhabitants. On the second day he stopped on the bank of the river Nizao to rest his party, and to give time for reinforcements to overtake him. Here one Melchor de Castro, who accompanied the admiral, learnt that the negroes had ravaged his plantations, sacked his house, killed one of his men, and carried off his Indian slaves. Without asking leave of the admiral, he departed in the night with two companions, visited his plantations, found all in confusion, and pursuing the negroes, sent to the admiral for aid. Eight horsemen were hastily despatched to his assistance, armed with bucklers and lances, and having six of the infantry mounted behind them. Decastro had three horsemen beside this reinforcement, and at the head of this little band overtook the negroes at break of day. The insurgents put themselves in battle array, armed with stones and

Indian spears, and uttering loud shouts and outcries. The Spanish horsemen braced their bucklers, couched their lances, and charged them at full speed. The negroes were soon routed, and fled to the rocks, leaving six dead and several wounded. Decastro also was wounded in the arm. The admiral coming up assisted him in the pursuit of the fugitives. As fast as they were taken, they were hanged on the nearest trees, and remained suspended, as spectacles of terror to their countrymen. This prompt severity checked all further attempt at revolt among the African slaves\*.

In the mean time the various enemies whom Don Diego had created, both in the colonies and in Spain, were actively and successfully employed. His old antagonist, the treasurer Passamonte, had charged him with usurping almost all the powers of the royal audience, and with having given to the royal declaration, re-establishing him in his office of viceroy, an extent never intended by the sovereign. These representations had weight at court; and in 1523 Don Diego received a most severe letter from the council of the Indies,

\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. III. l. iv. c. 9.



charging him with the various abuses and excesses alleged against him, and commanding him, under penalty of forfeiting all his privileges and titles, to revoke the innovations he had made, and to restore things to their former state. To prevent any plea of ignorance of this mandate, the royal audience was enjoined to promulgate it, and call upon all persons to conform to it, and to see that it was properly obeyed. The admiral received also a letter from the council, informing him that his presence was necessary in Spain to give information as to the foregoing matters and advice relative to the reformation of various abuses, and to the treatment and preservation of the Indians; he was requested, therefore, to repair to court without waiting for further orders\*.

Don Diego understood this to be a peremptory recal, and obeyed accordingly. On his arrival in Spain, he immediately presented himself before the court at Victoria, with the frank and fearless spirit of an upright man, and pleaded his cause so well that the sovereign and council acknowledged his innocence on all the points of

\* Herrera, Decad. I, l. v. c. 4.



accusation. He convinced them, moreover, of the fidelity with which he had discharged his duties ; of his zeal for the public good and the glory of the crown ; and that all the representations against him arose from the jealousy and enmity of Passamonte and other royal officers in the colonies, who were impatient of any superior authority in the island to restrain them.

Having completely established his innocence and exposed the calumnies of his enemies, Don Diego trusted that he would soon obtain justice as to all his claims. As these, however, involved a participation in the profits of vast and richly productive provinces, he experienced the delays and difficulties usual with such demands ; for it is only when justice costs nothing that it is readily rendered. His earnest solicitations at length obtained an order from the emperor, that a commission should be formed, composed of the grand chancellor, the friar Loyasa, confessor to the emperor and president of the royal council of the Indies, and a number of other distinguished personages. They were to inquire into the various points in dispute between the admiral and the fiscal,

and into the proceedings which had taken place before the council of the Indies, with the power of determining what justice required in the case.

1825 The affair, however, was protracted to such a length, and accompanied by so many toils, vexations, and disappointments, that the unfortunate Diego, like his father, died in the pursuit. For two years he had followed the court from city to city during its migrations; from Victoria to Burgos, Valladolid, Madrid, and Toledo. In the winter of 1825, the emperor set out from Toledo for Seville. The admiral undertook to follow him, though his constitution was broken by fatigue and vexation, and he was wasting away under the attack of a slow fever. Oviedo the historian saw him at Toledo, two days before his departure, and joined with his friends in endeavours to dissuade him from a journey in such a state of health, and at such a season. Their persuasions were in vain. Don Diego was not aware of the extent of his malady: he told them that he should repair to Seville, passing by the church of our lady of Guadalupe, to offer up his devotions at that shrine; and he trusted, through the intercession

of the mother of God, soon to be restored to health\*. He accordingly left Toledo in a litter on the 21st of February, 1526, having previously confessed and taken the communion, and arrived the same day at Montalvan, distant about six leagues. There his illness increased to such a degree, that he saw his end approaching. He employed the following day in arranging the affairs of his conscience, and expired on February 23, being little more than fifty years of age ; his premature death having been hastened by the griefs and troubles he had experienced. “ He was worn out,” says Herrera, “ by following up his claims, and defending himself from the calumnies of his competitors, who, with many stratagems and devices, sought to obscure the glory of the father, and the virtue of the son†.”

We have seen how the discovery of the New World rendered the residue of the life of Columbus a tissue of wrongs, hardships, and afflictions ; and how the jealousy and enmity he had awakened were inherited by his son. It remains to show

\* Charleroix, *Hist. St. Doming.* l. 6.

† Herrera, *Decad.* III. l. viii. c. 15.

briefly in what degree the anticipations of perpetuity, wealth, and honour to his family were fulfilled.

When Don Diego Columbus died, his wife and family were at St. Domingo. He left two sons, Luis and Christopher, and three daughters, Maria, who afterwards married Don Sancho de Cordova, Juana, who married Don Luis de Cuera, and Isabella, who married Don Giorge of Portugal, Count of Gelves. He had also a natural son named Christopher\*.

After the death of Don Diego, his noble-spirited vicequeen, left with a number of young children, endeavoured to assert and maintain the rights of the family. Understanding that, according to the privileges accorded to Christopher Columbus, they had a just claim to the viceroyalty of the province of Veragua, as having been discovered by him, she demanded a licence from the royal audience of

\* Memorial ajustado sobre el estado de Veragua. Charleroix mentions another son named Diego, and calls one of the daughters Philippine. Spontorno says that the daughter Maria took the veil, confounding her with a niece. These are trivial errors, merely noticed to avoid the imputation of inaccuracy. The account of the descendants of Columbus here given accords with a genealogical tree of the family, produced before the council of the Indies in a great lawsuit for the estates.

Hispaniola, to recruit men and fit out an armada to colonize that country. This the audience refused, and sent information of the demand to the emperor. He replied, that the vicequeen should be kept in suspense until the justice of her claim could be ascertained ; as, although he had at various times given commission to different persons to examine the doubts and objections which had been opposed by the fiscal, no decision had ever been made\*. The enterprise thus contemplated by the vicequeen was never carried into effect.

Shortly afterwards she sailed for Spain to protect the claim of the eldest son, Don Luis, then six years of age. Charles V. was absent, but she was most graciously received by the empress. The title of admiral of the Indies was immediately conferred on her son Don Luis, and the emperor augmented his revenues, and conferred other favours on the family. Charles V., however, could never be prevailed upon to give Don Luis the title of viceroy, although that dignity had been decreed

\* Herrera, Decad. IV. lib. ii. c. 6.

to his father, a few years previous to his death, as an hereditary right \*.

In 1538 the young admiral, Don Luis, then about eighteen years of age, was at court, having instituted proceedings before the proper tribunals for the recovery of the viceroyalty: two years afterwards, the suit was settled by arbitration, his uncle Don Fernando and cardinal Loyasa, president of the council of the Indies, being umpires. By a compromise, Don Luis was declared captain-general of Hispaniola, but with such limitations that it was little more than a bare title. Don Luis sailed for Hispaniola, but did not remain there long. He found his dignities and privileges mere sources of vexation, and finally entered into a compromise, which relieved himself and gratified the emperor. He gave up all pretensions to the viceroyalty of the New World, receiving in its stead the titles of duke of Veragua and marquis of Jamaica†. He commuted also the claim to a tenth of the produce of the Indies for a pension of one thousand doubloons of gold‡.

\* Charleroix, *Hist. St. Domingo*, l. vi. p. 443.

† *Ib.* c. i. lib. vi. pp. 446-7.

‡ Spotorno, *Hist. Colomb.* p. 123.

Don Luis did not long enjoy this substitution of a certain though moderate revenue, for a magnificent but unproductive claim. He died shortly afterwards, leaving no other male issue than an illegitimate son, named Christopher. He left two daughters by his wife Doña Maria de Mosquera, one named Philippa and the other Maria, who became a nun in the convent of St. Quirce, at Valladolid.

Don Luis having no legitimate son was succeeded by his nephew Diego, son to his brother Christopher. A litigation took place between this young heir and his cousin Philippa, daughter of the late Don Luis. The convent of St. Quirce also put in a claim on behalf of its inmate Doña Maria, who had taken the veil. Christopher, natural son to Don Luis, likewise became a prosecutor in the suit, but was set aside on account of his illegitimacy. Don Diego and his cousin Philippa soon thought it better to join their claims and interests in wedlock, than to pursue a tedious contest. They were married, and their union was happy, though not fruitful. Diego died without issue in



1578, and with him the legitimate male line of Columbus became extinct.

One of the most important lawsuits that the world has ever witnessed now arose for the estates and dignities descended from the great discoverer. Don Diego had two sisters, Francisca and Maria, the former of whom, and the children of the latter, advanced their several claims. To these parties was added Bernard Colombo, of Cogoleto, who claimed as lineal descendant from Bartholomew Columbus, the adelantado, brother to the discoverer. He was, however, pronounced ineligible, as the adelantado had no acknowledged, and certainly no legitimate offspring.

Baldasser or Balthasar Colombo, of the house of Cuccaro and Conzano, in the dukedom of Montferrat, in Piedmont, was an active and persevering claimant. He came from Italy into Spain, where he devoted himself during many years to the prosecution of this suit. He produced a genealogical tree of his family, in which was contained one Dominico Colombo, lord of Cuccaro, whom he maintained to be the identical father of Christo-



pher Columbus the admiral. He proved that this Dominico was living at the requisite era, and produced many witnesses, who had heard that the navigator was born in the castle of Cuccaro; from whence, it was added, he and his two brothers had eloped at an early age, and had never returned\*. A monk is also mentioned among the witnesses, who made oath that Christopher and his brothers were born in that castle of Cuccaro. This testimony was afterwards withdrawn by the prosecutor, as it was found that the monk's recollection must have extended back considerably upward of a century†. The claim of Balthasar was negatived. His proofs that Christopher Columbus was a native of Cuccaro were rejected as only hearsay or traditional evidence. His ancestor Dominico, it appeared from his own showing, died in 1456; whereas it was established that Dominico, the father of the admiral, was living upwards of thirty years after that date.

The cause was finally decided by the council of the Indies on the 2d of December, 1608. The

\* Bossi, *Hist. Columb. Dissertations*, p. 67.

† Bossi, *Dissertation on the Country of Columb.* p. 63.

male line was declared to be extinct. Don Nuno or Nugno Gelves de Portugallo was put in possession, and became duke of Veragua. He was grandson to Isabella, third daughter of Don Diego, (son of the discoverer), by his vicequeen Doña Maria de Toledo. The descendants of the two elder sisters of Isabella had a prior claim, but their progeny became extinct previous to this decision of the suit. The first named, Isabella, had married Don George of Portugal, count of Gelves. "Thus," says Charleroix, "the dignities and wealth of Columbus passed into a branch of the Portuguese house of Braganza, established in Spain, of which the heirs are entitled "*De Portugallo, Colon, duke de Veragua, marquis de la Jamaica, y almirante de las Indias*\*."

The suit of Balthasar Colombo of Cuccaro was rejected, under three different forms, by the council of the Indies; and his application for an allowance of support under the legacy of Columbus, in favour of poor relations, was also refused, although the other parties had assented to

\* Charleroix, Hist. St. Domingo, t. 1. l. 6. p. 479.

the demand \*. He died in Spain, where he had resided many years in prosecution of this suit. His son returned to Italy, persisting in the validity of his claim ; he said that it was in vain to seek justice in Spain ; they were too much interested to keep those dignities and estates among themselves. But he gave out that he had received twelve thousand doubloons of gold in compromise from the other parties. Spotorno, under sanction of Ignazio de Giovanni, a learned canon, treats this assertion as a bravado to cover his defeat, being contradicted by his evident poverty †. The family of Cuccaro, however, still maintain their right, and express great veneration for the memory of their illustrious ancestor the admiral ; and travellers occasionally visit their old castle in Piedmont, with great reverence, as the birthplace of the discoverer of the New World.

\* Bossi, Dissertation on the Country of Columbus.

† Spotorno, p. cxxvii.



No. III.

FERNANDO COLUMBUS.

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FERNANDO COLUMBUS (or Colon, as he is called in Spain), the natural son and the historian of the admiral, was born in Cordova. There is an uncertainty about the exact time of his birth. According to his epitaph, it must have been on the 28th September, 1488, but, according to his original papers, preserved in the church at Seville, and which were examined by Don Diego Ortiz de Zuñiga, historian of that city, it would appear to have been on the 29th of August, 1487. His mother, Doña Beatrix Enriquez, was of a respectable family, but was never married to the admiral, as has been stated by some of his biographers.

Early in 1494 Fernando was carried to court, together with his elder brother, Diego, by his uncle, Don Bartholomew, to enter the royal household in quality of page to the prince, Don Juan,

son and heir to Ferdinand and Isabella. He and his brother remained in this situation until the death of the prince, when they were taken by queen Isabella as pages into her own service. Their education of course was well attended to, and Fernando, in after life, gave proofs of being a learned man.

In the year 1502, at the tender age of thirteen or fourteen years, Fernando accompanied his father in his fourth voyage of discovery, and encountered all its singular and varied hardships with a fortitude that is mentioned with praise and admiration by the admiral.

After the death of his father, it would appear that Fernando made two voyages to the New World ; he also accompanied the emperor Charles V. to Italy, Flanders, and Germany ; and, according to Zuñiga (*Anales de Sevilla*, de 1593, No. 3.), travelled over all Europe, and a part of Africa and Asia. Possessing talents, judgment, and industry, these opportunities were not lost upon him, and he acquired much information in geography, navigation, and natural history. Being

of a studious habit and fond of books, he formed a select yet copious library of more than twenty thousand volumes, in print and in manuscript. With the sanction of the emperor Charles V., he undertook to establish an academy and college of mathematics at Seville ; and for this purpose commenced the construction of a sumptuous edifice without the walls of the city, facing the Guadalquivir, in the place where the monastery of San Laureano is now situated. His constitution, however, had been broken by the sufferings he had experienced in his travels and voyages, and a premature death prevented the completion of his plan of the academy, and broke off other labours. He died at Seville on the 12th July, 1539, at the age, according to his epitaph, of fifty years, nine months, and fourteen days. He left no issue, and was never married. His body was interred, according to his request, in the cathedral church of Seville. He bequeathed his valuable library to the same establishment. “ It was put,” says Zuñiga, “ in the Chapter-House of the church, a building which had formerly served for a royal chapel, and



is adorned with book-cases of mahogany, beautifully carved, and the walls and vaults are painted in fresco; in which it remains, forgotten and neglected, yet withheld from the world \*."

Don Fernando devoted himself much to letters. According to the inscription on his tomb, he composed a work in four books or volumes, the title of which is defaced on the monument, and the work itself is lost. This is much to be regretted, as, according to Zuñiga, the fragments of the inscription specify it to have contained, among a variety of matters historical, moral, and geographical, notices of the countries he had visited, but especially of the New World, and of the voyages and discoveries of his father.

His most important and permanent work, however, was a history of the admiral, which he composed in Spanish. It was translated into Italian by Alonzo de Ulloa, and from this Italian translation, or rather from the version of it again into Spanish, have proceeded the editions which have since appeared in various languages. It is sin-

\* Zuñiga, *Anales de Sevilla*, l. xiv. p. 496.

gular that the work only exists in Spanish in form of a retranslation from that of Ulloa, and it is full of errors in the orthography of proper names, and in dates and distances.

Don Fernando was an eye-witness of some of the facts which he relates, particularly of the fourth voyage, wherein he accompanied his father. He had also the papers and charts of his father, and recent documents of all kinds, to extract from, as well as familiar acquaintance with the principal personages who were concerned in the event which he records. He was a man of probity and discernment, and writes more dispassionately than could be expected, when treating of matters which affected the honour, the interest, and happiness of his father. It is to be regretted, however, that he should have suffered the whole of his father's life, previous to his discoveries, a period of about fifty-six years, to remain in obscurity. He appears to have wished to cast a cloud over it, and only to have presented his father to the reader, after he had rendered himself illustrious by his actions, and his history had become in a

manner identified with the history of the world. His work, however, is an invaluable document, entitled to great faith, and is the corner stone of the history of the American continent.

#### No. IV.

#### LINEAGE OF COLUMBUS.

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THE ancestry of Christopher Columbus has formed a point of zealous controversy, which is not yet satisfactorily settled. Several honourable families, possessing domains in Placentia, Montferat, and the different parts of the Genoese territories, claim him as belonging to their houses; and to these has recently been added the noble family of Colombo in Modena\*. The natural desire to prove consanguinity with a man of distinguished renown has excited this rivalry; but it has been heightened, in particular instances, by the hope of succeeding to titles and situations of wealth and honour, when his male line of descendants became extinct. The investigation is involved in particular obscurity, as even his imme-

\* Spotorno, Hist. Mem. p. 5

diate relatives appear to have been in ignorance on the subject.

Fernando Columbus, in his biography of the admiral, after a pompous prelude, in which he attempts to throw a vague and cloudy magnificence about the origin of his father, notices slightly the attempts of some to obscure his fame, by making him a native of various small and insignificant villages; and dwells with more complacency upon others, who make him a native of places in which there were persons of much honour of the name, and many sepulchral monuments with arms and epitaphs of the Colombos. He relates his having himself gone to the castle of Cugureo, to visit two brothers of the family of Colombo, who were rich and noble, the youngest of whom was above one hundred years of age, and who he had heard were relatives of his father; but they could give him no information upon the subject; whereupon he breaks forth into his professed contempt for these adventitious claims, declaring, that he thinks it better to content himself with dating from the glory of the admiral, than to go about inquiring whether his father

“were a merchant or one who kept his hawks \*;” since, adds he, of persons of similar pursuits there are thousands who die every day, whose memory even among their own neighbours and relatives perishes immediately, without its being possible afterwards to ascertain even whether they existed.

After this and a few more expressions of similar disdain for these empty distinctions, he indulges in vehement abuse of Agostino Giustini, whom he calls a false historian, an inconsiderate, partial, or malignant compatriot, for having in his Psalter traduced his father, by saying that in his youth he had been employed in mechanical occupations.

As, after all this discussion, Fernando leaves the question of his father's parentage in all its original obscurity, yet appears irritably sensitive to any derogatory suggestions of others, his whole evidence tends to the conviction that he really knew nothing to boast of in his ancestry.

\* Literally, in the original, *Cazador de Volateria*, a falconer. Hawking was in those days an amusement of the highest classes, and to keep hawks was almost a sign of nobility.

Of the nobility and antiquity of the Colombo family, of which the admiral probably was a remote descendant, we have some account in Herrera. "We learn," he says, "that the emperor Otto the Second, in 940, confirmed to the counts Pietro, Giovanni, and Alexandro Colombo, brothers, the feudatory possessions which they held within the jurisdiction of the cities of Ayqui, Savona, Aste, Montferrato, Turin, Viceli, Parma, Cremona, and Bergamo, and all others which they held in Italy. It appears that the Colombos of Cuccaro, Cucureo, and Placentia were the same, and that the emperor in the same year '940' made donation to the said three brothers of the castles of Cuccaro, Conzano, Rosignano, and others, and of the fourth part of Bistanio, which appertained to the empire \*."

One of the boldest attempts of those biographers bent on ennobling Columbus has been to make him son of the lord of Cuccaro, a burgh of Montferrat in Piedmont, and to state that he was born in his father's castle at that place. From

\* Herrera, Decad. I. l. 1. ch. vii.



hence it is said Columbus and his brothers eloped at an early age, and never returned. This was asserted in the course of a suit, instituted by a certain Baldassarre, or Balthasar Colombo, resident in Genoa, but originally of Cuccaro, claiming the title and estates on the death of Diego Colon, duke of Veragua, in 1578, the great grandson and last legitimate male descendant of the admiral. The council of the Indies decided against this claim to relationship. Some account of the lawsuit will be found in another part of this work.

This romantic story, like all others of the nobility of his parentage, is at utter variance with the subsequent events of the admiral's life, his long struggles with indigence and obscurity, and the difficulties he endured from the want of family connexions. How can it be believed, says Bossi, that this same man, who, in his most cruel adversities, was incessantly taunted by his enemies with the obscurity of his birth, should not reply to this reproach by declaring his origin, if he were really descended from the lords of Cuccaro, Conzano, and Rosignano ? a circumstance which would have

obtained him the highest credit with the Spanish nobility\*.

The different families of Colombo which lay claim to the great navigator, seem to be various branches of one tree, and there is little doubt of his appertaining remotely to the same respectable stock.

It appears probable, however, that Columbus sprang immediately from a line of humble but industrious citizens, which had existed in Genoa even from the time of Giacomo Colombo, the wool-carder, in 1311, mentioned by Spotorno; nor is this in any wise incompatible with the intimation of Fernando Columbus, that the family had been reduced from high estate to great poverty by the wars of Lombardy. The feuds of Italy, in those ages, had broken down and scattered many of the noblest families, and while some branches remained in the lordly heritage of castles and domains, others were confounded with the humblest population of the cities.

\* Dissertation, &c.

No. V.

BIRTHPLACE OF COLUMBUS.

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THERE has been much controversy about the birthplace of Columbus. The greatness of his renown has induced various places to lay claim to him as a native, and from motives of laudable pride ; for nothing reflects greater lustre upon a city than to have given birth to distinguished men. The original and long established opinion was in favour of Genoa ; but such strenuous claims were asserted by the states of Placentia, and in particular of Piedmont, that the academy of sciences and letters of Genoa was induced, in 1812, to nominate three of its members, Signors Serra, Carrega, and Piaggio, commissioners, to examine into these pretensions.

The claims of Placentia had been first advanced in 1662, by Petro Maria Campi, in the ecclesiastical history of that place, who maintained that Columbus was a native of the village of Pradello

in that vicinity. It appeared probable, on investigation, that Bertolino Columbo, great grandfather to the admiral, had owned a small property in Pradello, the rent of which had been received by Dominico Colombo of Genoa, and after his death by his sons Christopher and Bartholomew. Admitting this assertion to be correct, there was no proof that either the admiral, his father, or grandfather, had ever resided on that estate. The very circumstances of the case indicated, on the contrary, that their home was in Genoa.

The claim of Piedmont was maintained with more plausibility. It was shown that a Dominico Colombo was lord of the castle of Cuccaro in Montferrat, at the time of the birth of Christopher Columbus, who, it was asserted, was his son, and born in his castle. Baltasar Colombo, a descendant of this person, instituted a lawsuit before the council of the Indies for the inheritance of the admiral when his male line became extinct. The council of the Indies decided against him, as is shown in the preceding account of his claim. It was proved that Dominico Colombo, father of

the admiral, was resident in Genoa both before, and many years after, the death of this lord of Cuccaro, who bore the same name.

The three commissioners appointed by the academy of science and letters of Genoa to examine into these pretensions, after a long and diligent investigation, gave a voluminous and circumstantial report in favour of Genoa. An ample digest of their inquest may be found in the History of Columbus by Signor Bossi, who, in an able dissertation on the question, confirms their opinion. It may be added, in further corroboration, that Peter Martyr and Bartholomew Las Casas, who were contemporaries and acquaintances of Columbus, and Juan de Barros, the Portuguese historian, all make Columbus a native of the Genoese territories.

There has been a question fruitful of discussion among the Genoese themselves, whether Columbus was born in the city of Genoa, or in some other part of the territory. Finale and Oneglia and Savona, towns on the Ligurian coast to the west, Boggiasco, Cogoleto, and several other towns and villages, claim him as their own. His family

possessed a small property at a village or hamlet between Quinto and Nervi, which bears the title of Torre dei Colombi \*.

Bartholomew Columbus, brother to the admiral, styled himself of Terra Rubra, in a Latin inscription on a map which he presented to Henry VII. of England; and Fernando Columbus states, in his history of the admiral, that he was accustomed to subscribe himself in the same manner before he attained to his dignities.

Cogoleto at one time bore away the palm. The families there claim the discoverer, and preserve a portrait of him. One or both of the two admirals named Colombo, with whom he sailed, are stated to have come from that place, and to have been confounded with him, so as to have given support to this idea †.

Savona, a city in the Genoese territories, has claimed the same honour, and this claim has recently been very strongly brought forward. Signor Giovanni Battista Belloro, an advocate of Savona, has strenuously maintained this claim in an in-

\* Bossi, French translation. Paris, 1824, p. 69.

† Idem.

genious disputation, dated May 12th, 1826, in form of a letter to the Baron du Zach, editor of a valuable astronomical and geographical journal \*.

Signor Belloro claims it as an admitted fact, that Domenico Colombo was for many years a resident and citizen of Savona, in which place one Christopher Columbus is shown to have signed a document in 1472.

He states that a public square in that city bore the name of Platea Columbi, toward the end of the fourteenth century; that the Ligurian government gave the name of "Jurisdizione di Columbi" to that district of the republic, under the persuasion that the great navigator was a native of Savona, and that Columbus gave the name of Savona to a little island adjacent to Hispaniola, among his earliest discoveries.

He quotes many Savonese writers, principally poets, and various historians and poets of other countries; and thus established the point that

\* Correspondence Astronom. Geograph. du Baron du Zach, vol. 14. Cahier 6. Lettre 29. 1826.



Columbus was held to be a native of Savona by persons of respectable authority.

He lays particular stress on the testimony of the magnifico Francisco Spinola, as related by the learned prelate Felippo Alberto Pollero, stating that he had seen the sepulchre of Christopher Columbus in the cathedral at Seville, and that the epitaph states him expressly to be a native of Savona.—“ Hic jacet Christophorus Columbus Savonensis \*.”

The proofs advanced by Signor Belloro show his zeal for the honour of his native city, but do not authenticate the fact he undertakes to establish. He shows clearly that many respectable writers believed Columbus to be a native of Savona ; but a far greater number can be adduced, and many of them contemporary with the admiral, some of them his intimate friends, others his fellow-citizens, who state him to have been born in the city of Genoa. Among the Savonese writers, Giulio Salinorio, who investigated the subject, comes

\* Felippo Alberto Pollero, *Epicherema*, cioè breve discorso per difesa di sua persona e carattere, Torino, per Gio. Battista Zappata. MCDXCVI. (read 1694) in 4to. p. 47.

expressly to the same conclusion—" *Genova citta nobilissima, era la patria de Colombo.*"

Signor Bellerio appears to be correct in stating that Dominico, the father of the admiral, was several years resident in Savona. But it appears from his own dissertation, that the Christopher who witnessed the testament in 1472 styled himself of Genoa—" *Christopherus Columbus Lanerius de Janua.*" This incident is stated by other writers, who presume this Christopher to have been the navigator, when on a visit to his father, in the interval of his early voyages. In as far as the circumstance bears on the point, it supports the idea that he was born at Genoa.

The epitaph, on which Signor Bellerio places his principal reliance, entirely fails. Christopher Columbus was not interred in the cathedral of Seville, nor was any monument erected to him in that edifice. The tomb to which the learned prelate Felippo Alberto Pollero alludes, may have been that of Fernando Columbus, son to the admiral, who was buried in the cathedral of Seville, to which he bequeathed his noble library. A monument was erected to his memory in that

church. The inscription quoted by Signor Bel-lero may have been erroneously written down from memory by the magnifico Francisco Spinola, under the mistaken idea that he had beheld the sepulchre of the admiral. As Fernando was born at Cordova, the term *Savonensis* must have been another error of memory in the magnifico.

This question of birthplace has also been investigated with considerable minuteness, and a decision given in favour of Genoa, by D. Giovan' Batista Spotorno, of the royal university in that city, in his historical memoir of Columbus. He shows that the family of the Colombi had long been resident in Genoa. By an extract from the notariat register, it appeared that one Giacomo Colombo, a woolcarder, resided without the gate of St. Andrea, in the year 1311. An agreement also, published by the academy of Genoa, proved that, in 1489, Domenico Colombo possessed a house and shop, and a garden with a well, in the street of St. Andrew's gate, anciently without the walls, presumed to have been the same residence with that of Giacomo Colombo. He rented also another house from the monks of St. Stephen, in

the Via Mulcento, leading from the street of St. Andrew to the Strada Giulia \*.

Signor Bossi states, that documents lately found in the archives of the monastery of St. Stephen, present the name of Domenico Colombo several times, from 1456 to 1459, and designate him as son of Giovanni Colombo, husband of Susanna Fontanarossa, and father of Christopher, Bartholomew, and Giacomo† (or Diego). He states also, that the receipts of the canons show that the last payment of rent was made by Domenico Colombo for his dwelling in 1489. He surmises that the admiral was born in a house belonging to the monks, situate in Via Mulcento, and that he was baptised in the church of St. Stephen. He adds that an ancient manuscript was submitted to the commissioners of the Genoese academy, in the margin of which the notary had stated that the name of Christopher was on the register of the parish as having been baptised in that church‡.

Andreas Bernaldez, the curate of Los Palacios,

\* Spotorno. Eng. transl. p. xi. xii.

† Bossi. French transl. p. 76.

‡ Ibid. p. 88.

who was an intimate friend of Columbus, says that he was of Genoa \*. Agostino Giustiniani, a contemporary of Columbus, likewise asserts it in his Polyglot Psalter, published in Genoa in 1516. Antonio de Herrera, an author of great accuracy, who, though not a contemporary, had access to the best documents, asserts decidedly that he was born in the city of Genoa.

To these names may be added that of Alexander Geraldini, brother to the nuncio, and instructor to the children of Ferdinand and Isabella, a most intimate friend of Columbus †; also Antonio Gallo ‡, Bartolomeo Senaraya §, and Uberto Foglietto ||, all contemporaries with the admiral, and natives of Genoa, together with an anonymous writer, who published an account of his voyage of discovery at Venice in 1509 ¶. It is unnecessary to mention historians of later date agreeing in the

\* Cura di Los Palacios. MS. c. 118.

† Alex. Geraldini, Itin. ad Reg. sub Æquinoc.

‡ Antonio Gallo, Annals of Genoa. Muratori, t. 23.

§ Senaraya. Muratori, t. 24.

|| Foglietto, Elog. Clar. Ligur.

¶ Grineus, Nov. Orb.

same fact, as they must have derived their information from some of these authorities.

The question in regard to the birthplace of Columbus has been treated thus minutely, because it has been, and still continues to be, a point of warm controversy. It may be considered, however, as conclusively decided by the highest authority, the evidence of Columbus himself. In a will executed in 1498, which has been admitted in evidence before the Spanish tribunals in certain lawsuits among his descendants, he twice declares that he was a native of the city of Genoa: "*Siendo yo nacido in Genova*," "I being born in Genoa;" and again he repeats the assertion, as a reason for enjoining certain conditions on his heirs, which manifest the interest he takes in his native place. "I command the said Don Diego, my son, or the person who inherits the said mayorazgo (or entailed estate) that he maintain always in the city of Genoa a person of our lineage (who shall be domiciled there with his wife), and to furnish him with an income on which he can live decently, as a person connected with our family, and hold foot-

ing and root in that city as a native of it, so that he may have aid and favour in that city in case of need, *for from thence I came and there was born\*.*”

In another part of his testament he expresses himself with a filial fondness in respect to Genoa. “I command the said Don Diego, or whoever shall possess the said mayorazgo, that he labour and strive always for the honour, and welfare, and increase of the city of Genoa, and employ all his abilities and means in defending and augmenting the welfare and honour of her republic, in all matters which are not contrary to the service of the church of God, and the state of the king and queen our sovereigns, and their successors.”

An informal codicil, executed by Columbus at Valladolid, May 4th, 1506, sixteen days before his death, was discovered, about 1785, in the Corsini

\* “Item. Mando el dicho Don Diego mi hijo, o a la persona qui heredare el dicho mayorazgo, que tenga y sostenga siempre en la ciudad de Genova una persona de nuestro linage que tenga alli casa y muger, é le ordene renta con que puede vivir honestamente, como persona tan llegada a nuestro linage, y haga pie y raiz en la dicho ciudad como natural della, porque podra haber de la dicho ciudad ayuda e favor en las cosas del menester suyo, *pues que della salí y en ella nací.*”



library at Rome. It is termed a military codicil, from being made in the manner which the civil law allows to the soldier who executes such an instrument on the eve of battle, or in expectation of death. It was written on the blank page of a little breviary presented to Columbus by Pope Alexander VII. Columbus leaves the book "to his beloved country, the republic of Genoa."

He directs the erection of an hospital in that city for the poor, with provision for its support, and he declares that republic his successor in the admiralty of the Indies, in the event of his male line becoming extinct.

The authenticity of this paper has been questioned. It has been said that there was no probability of Columbus having resort to a usage with which he was most likely unacquainted. The objections are not cogent. Columbus was accustomed to the peculiarities of a military life, and he repeatedly wrote letters, in critical moments, as a precaution against some fatal occurrence that seemed to impend. The present codicil, from its date, must have been written a few days previous

to his death, perhaps at a moment when he imagined himself at extremity. This may account for any difference in the handwriting, especially as he was at times so affected by the gout in his hands as not to be able to write except at night. Particular stress has been laid on the signature; but it does not appear that he was uniform in regard to that, and it is a point to which any one who attempted a forgery would be attentive. It does not appear likewise that any advantage could have been obtained by forging the paper, or that any such was attempted.

In 1502, when Columbus was about to depart on his fourth and last voyage, he wrote to his friend, doctor Nicolo Oderigo, formerly ambassador from Genoa to Spain, and forwarded to him copies of all his grants and commissions from the Spanish sovereigns, authenticated before the *alcaldes* of Seville. He at the same time wrote to the bank of San Georgio, at Genoa, assigning a tenth of his revenues to be paid to that city, in diminution of the duties on corn, wine, and other provisions.

Why should Columbus feel this strong interest

in Genoa had he been born in any of the other Italian states which have laid claim to him? He was under no obligation to Genoa. He had resided there but a brief portion of his early life, and his proposition for discovery, according to some writers, had been scornfully rejected by that republic. There is nothing to warrant so strong an interest in Genoa, but the filial tie which links the heart of a man to his native place, however he may be separated from it by time or distance, and however little he may be indebted to it for patronage.

Again : had Columbus been born in any of the towns and villages of the Genoese coast which have claimed him for a native, why should he have made these bequests in favour of the city of Genoa, and not of his native town or village?

These bequests were evidently dictated by a mingled sentiment of pride and affection, which would be without all object if not directed to his native place. He was at this time elevated above all petty pride on the subject. His renown was so brilliant that it would have shed a lustre on any

hamlet, however obscure ; and the strong love of country here manifested would never have felt satisfied, until it had singled out the spot, and nestled down in the very cradle of his infancy. These appear to be powerful reasons, drawn from natural feeling, for deciding in favour of Genoa.

No. VI.

THE COLOMBOS.

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DURING the early part of the life of Columbus, there were two other navigators, bearing the same name, of some rank and celebrity, with whom he occasionally sailed. According to Fernando Columbus (*Hist. del Almirante*, ch. 1.) they were relatives of his father; and Columbus, in one of his letters, says, “I am not the first admiral of our family.”

These two were uncle and nephew: the latter is termed by historians, Colombo the younger (by the Spanish historians, Colombo el Mozo). The elder of them was in the French service; probably he entered it at the time that Genoa was under the protection, or rather the domination, of France. It is said that he was engaged in the expeditions of John of Anjou against Naples, and that Columbus sailed with him.

Mention is made of the elder Colombo in

Zuriata's *Annals of Arragon*, (l. xix. p. 261.) in the war between Spain and Portugal, on the subject of the claim of the princess Juana to the crown of Castile. In 1476, the king of Portugal determined to go to the Mediterranean coast of France, to incite his ally Louis XI. to prosecute the war in the province of Guipuzcao.

The king left Toro, says Zurita, on the 13th June, and went by the river to the city of Porto, in order to await the armada of the king of France, the captain of which was Colon (Colombo), who was to navigate by the straits of Gibraltar to pass to Marseilles.

After some delays, Colombo arrived, at the latter part of July, with the French armada, at Borneo, on the coast of Biscay, where he encountered a violent storm, lost his principal ship, and ran to the coast of Galicia with an intention of attacking Ribaldo, and lost many of his men. From thence he went to Lisbon to receive the king of Portugal, who embarked in the fleet in August with a number of his noblemen, and took two thousand two hundred foot soldiers, and four hundred and seventy horse, to strengthen the

Portuguese garrisons along the Barbary coast. There were in the squadron twelve ships and five caravels.

After touching at Ceuta, the fleet proceeded to Colibre, where the king disembarked in the middle of September, the weather not permitting them to proceed to Marseilles (Zurita, l. xix. c. 51).

This Colombo is evidently the naval commander of whom the following mention is made by Jacques George Chauffepies, in his supplement to Bayle (vol. ii. p. 126).

“ I do not know what dependence,” says Chauffepies, “ is to be placed on a fact reported in the *Ducatiana* (part i. p. 143.), that Columbus was, in 1474, captain of several ships for Louis XI., and that, as the Spaniards had made at that time an irruption into Rousillon, he thought that, for reprisal, and without contravening the peace between the two crowns, he could run down Spanish vessels. He attacked, therefore, and took two galleys of that nation, freighted on the account of various individuals. On complaints of this action being made to king Ferdinand, he wrote on the subject to



Louis XI. : his letter is dated the 9th December, 1474. Ferdinand terms Christopher Columbus a subject of Louis ; this was because, as is well known, Columbus was a Genoese, and Louis was sovereign of Genoa, although that city and Savona were held of him in fief by the duke of Milan."

It is highly probable that it was the squadron of this same Colombo which appeared in the Levant in 1475 and 1476, and on one occasion attacked the Venetian squadron stationed to protect the island of Cyprus ; mention of which was made in a letter of two Milanese gentlemen to the duke of Milan, dated 1476, cited by Bossi, and after him by Spotorno.

The nephew of this Colombo, called by the Spaniards Colombo el Mozo, commanded, likewise, a few years afterwards, a squadron in the French service, and became formidable in the Mediterranean, as will appear in a subsequent illustration. The names of these two Colombos, uncle and nephew, appearing vaguely at intervals during the obscure period of the admiral's life, have been confounded with his name by historians. Fernando Columbus says that his father

sailed for several years with Colombo the younger\*. It is probable that he may, at various times, have had an inferior command in the squadron of both uncle and nephew, and that he may have been present on the above cited occasions.

\* Hist. del Almirante, c. v.



No. VII.

EXPEDITION OF JOHN OF ANJOU.

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ABOUT the time that Columbus had attained his twenty-fourth year, his native city was in a state of great alarm and peril from the threatened invasion of Alphonso V. of Arragon, king of Naples. Finding itself too weak to contend singly with such a foe, and having in vain looked for assistance from Italy, it placed itself under the protection of Charles VII. of France. That monarch sent to its assistance John of Anjou, son of René, or Renato, king of Naples, who had been dispossessed of his crown by Alphonso. John of Anjou, otherwise called the duke of Calabria\*, immediately took upon himself the command of the city, repaired its fortifications, and defended the entrance of the harbour with strong chains. In the meantime Alphonso had prepared a large land force,

\* Duke of Calabria was the title of the son and heir of the king of Naples, being similar to that of prince of Wales in England.

and had assembled an armament of twenty ships and ten galleys at Ancona, on the frontiers of Genoa. The situation of the latter was considered imminently perilous, when Alphonso suddenly fell ill of a calenture and died, leaving the kingdoms of Arragon and Sicily to his brother John, and the kingdom of Naples to his son Ferdinand.

The death of Alphonso and the subsequent division of his dominions, while they relieved the fears of the Genoese, gave rise to new hopes on the part of the house of Anjou ; and the duke John, encouraged by emissaries from various powerful partisans among the Neapolitan nobility, determined to make a bold attempt upon Naples for the recovery of the crown. The Genoese entered into his cause with spirit, furnishing him with ships, galleys, and money. His father, René, or Renato, fitted out twelve galleys for the expedition in the harbour of Marseilles, and sent him assurance of an abundant supply of money, and of the assistance of the king of France. The brilliant nature of the enterprise attracted the attention of the daring and restless spirits of the times. The chivalrous nobleman, the soldier of fortune, the hardy cor-

sair, the bold adventurer, or the mercenary partizan, enlisted under the banners of the duke of Calabria. It is stated by historians that Columbus served in the armament from Genoa, in a squadron commanded by one of the Colombos, his relations.

The expedition against Naples sailed in October, 1459, and arrived off Sessa, between the mouths of the Garigliano and the Volturno. The news of its arrival was the signal of universal revolt; the factious barons and their vassals hastened to join the standard of Anjou; and the duke soon saw the finest provinces of the Neapolitan dominions at his command, and with his army and squadron menaced the city of Naples itself.

In the history of this expedition, we meet with one hazardous action of the fleet in which Columbus had embarked.

The army of John of Anjou being closely invested by a superior force, was in a perilous predicament at the mouth of the Sarno. In this conjuncture, the captain of the armada landed with his men and occupied the neighbourhood, hoping to awaken in the populace their former

enthusiasm for the banner of Anjou, and perhaps to take Naples by surprise. The troops from the fleet were sent against them. Having little of the discipline of regular soldiery and much of the freebooting disposition of maritime rovers, they had scattered themselves about the country, intent chiefly upon spoil. They were attacked by the infantry and put to the rout, with the loss of many killed and wounded. Endeavouring to make their way back to the ships, they found the passes seized and blocked up by the people of Sorrento, who assailed them with dreadful havoc. Their flight now became desperate and headlong; many, it is said, seized with the madness of despair threw themselves from rocks and precipices into the sea, and but a small portion regained the ships.

The contest of John of Anjou for the crown of Naples lasted four years. For a time fortune favoured him, and the prize seemed almost within his grasp: but reverses succeeded; he was defeated at various points; the factious nobles, one by one, deserted him and returned to their allegiance to Alphonso, and the duke was finally compelled to



retire to the island of Ischia. Here he remained for some time, guarded by eight galleys, which likewise harassed the bay of Naples\*. In this squadron, which loyally adhered to him until he ultimately abandoned this unfortunate enterprise, it is supposed Columbus may have served.

\* Colnucio, *Hist.* cap. l. vii. c. 17.



No. VIII.

CAPTURE OF THE VENETIAN GALLEYS BY  
COLOMBO THE YOUNGER.

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As the account of the sea-fight by which Fernando Columbus asserts that his father was first thrown upon the shores of Portugal has been adopted by various respectable historians, it is proper to give particular reasons for discrediting it.

Fernando expressly says that it was in an action mentioned by Marco Antonio Sabelico, in the eighth book of his tenth Decade; that the squadron in which Columbus served was commanded by a famous corsair called Columbus the younger (Colombo el Mozo); and that an embassy was sent from Venice to thank the king of Portugal for the succour he afforded to the Venetian captains and crews. All this is certainly recorded in Sabelicus; but the battle took place in 1485, a year after Columbus had *left* Portugal. Zurita, in his annals of Arragon, under the date of 1485, mentions this same action. He says,

“ At this time four Venetian galleys sailed from the island of Cadiz, and took the route for Flanders ; they were laden with merchandise from the Levant, especially from the island of Sicily, and, passing by Cape St. Vincent, they were attacked by a French corsair, son of captain Colon (Colombo), who had seven vessels in his armada ; and the galleys were captured the twenty-first of August \*.”

A much fuller account is given in the life of king John II. of Portugal, by Garcia de Reesende, who likewise records it as happening in 1485. He says the Venetian galleys were taken and robbed by the French, and the captains and crews, wounded, plundered, and maltreated, were turned on shore at Cascoes. Here they were succoured by Doña Maria de Meneses, countess of Monsanto. When king John II. heard of the circumstance, being much grieved that such an event should have happened on his coast, and being disposed to show his friendship for the republic of Venice, he ordered that the Venetian captains should be furnished with rich raiment of

\* Zurita, lib. xx. c. 64.

silk and costly cloths, and provided with horses and mules, that they might make their appearance before him in a style befitting themselves and their country. He received them with great kindness and distinction, expressing himself with princely courtesy, both as to themselves and the republic of Venice; and having heard their account of the battle, and of their destitute situation, he assisted them with a large sum of money to ransom their galleys from the French cruisers. The latter took all the merchandise on board of their ships; but king John prohibited any of the spoil from being purchased within his dominions. Having thus generously relieved and assisted the captains, and administered to the necessities of their crews, he enabled them all to return in their own galleys to Venice.

The dignitaries of the republic were so highly sensible of this munificence on the part of king John, that they sent a stately embassy to that monarch with rich presents and warm expressions of gratitude. Geronimo Donato was charged with this mission, a man eminent for learning and eloquence. He was honourably received and enter-

tained by king John, and dismissed with royal presents, among which were genets and mules, with sumptuous trappings and caparisons, and many negro slaves richly clad \*.

The following is the account of this action as given by Sabellicus in his History of Venice† :

“ Erano andati quattro Galee delle quai Bartolomeo Minio era capitano. Queste navicando per l’Iberico mare, Colombo il piu giovane, nepote de quel Colombo famoso corsale, fecesi incontro a’ Venetiani di notte appresso il Sacro Promontorio, chiamasi hora Capo di San Vincenzo, con sette navi guernite da combattere. Egli quantunque nel primo incontro haber seco disposti d’opprimere le navi Venetiane, si retenne però da combattere sin al giorno, tuttavia per essa alla bataglia piu acconcio così le seguia, che le prode del corsale toccavano le poppe de Venitiani. Venuto il gi-

\* Obras de Garcia de Reesende, c. 58. Evora, 1554.

† Marco Antonio Cocceio, better known under the name of Sabellicus, a cognomen which he adopted on being crowned poet in the pedantic academy of Pomponius Lætus. He was a contemporary of Columbus, and makes brief mention of his discoveries in the eighth book of the tenth Decade of his Universal History. By some writers he is called the Livy of his time; others accuse him of being full of misrepresentations in favour of Venice. The elder Scaliger charges him with venality, and with being influenced by Venetian gold.

orno incontanenti i Barbari diedero l'assalto, sostennero i Venitiani allhora l'empito del nemico, per numero de' navi e de' combattanti superiore, e durò il conflitto atroce per molte hore. Rari fiate fù combattuto contro simili nemici con tanto uccisione, perche a pena si costuma d'attacarsi contro di loro se non per occasione. Affirmano alcuni, che vi furono presenti, esser morti delle ciurme Venitiane da trecento huomini.

“ Altre dicono que fù meno. Morì in quella zuffa Lorenzo Michele capitano d'una galera, e Giovanni Delfino d'altro capitano fratello. Era durata la zuffa del fare del giorno fin' ad hore venti, et erano le gente Venetiane mal trattate. Era gia la nave Delfina in potere de' nemici quando le altre ad una si renderono. Narrano alcuni, che furono di quel aspero conflitto partecipi, haver numerato nelle loro navi da prodo a poppe ottanta valorosi huomini estinti, i quai dal nemico veduti, lo mossero a gemere e dire con sdegno, che cosi havevano voluto Venitiani. I corpi morti furono gettati nel mare, e i feriti posti nel lido. Quei che remasero vivi, seguirono con le nave il Capitano vittorioso sin' a Lisbona et ivi



furono tutti licenziati. \* \* \* \*

Quivi furono i Venetiani benignamente ricevuti del Re, gli infermi furono medicati, gli altri ebbero abiti e denari secondo la loro conditione.

\* \* \* \*

Oltre ciò vietò in tutto il Regno, che alcuno non comprasse della preda Venetiana, portata da i corsali. La nuova dell' havuta rovina no poco afflisse la citta, erano perduti in quella mercutantia da ducento milo ducati; ma il danno particular de gli huomini uccisi diede maggior afflitione."

*Marc. Ant. Sabelico, Hist. Venet. Decad. IV. l. 3.*

No. IX.

AMERIGO VESPUCCI.

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AMONG the earliest and most intelligent of the navigators who followed the track of Columbus, was Amerigo Vespucci. He has been considered by many as the first discoverer of the southern continent, and, by a singular caprice of fortune, his name has been given to the whole of the New World. It has been strenuously insisted, however, that he had no claim to the title of a discoverer ; that he merely sailed in a subordinate capacity, in squadrons commanded by others ; that the account of his first voyage is a fabrication ; and that he did not visit the main land until after it had been discovered and coasted by Columbus. As this question has been made a matter of warm and voluminous controversy, it is proper to take a summary view of it in the present work.

Amerigo Vespucci was born in Florence, March 9th, 1451, of a noble, but not at that time a

wealthy family : his father's name was Anastasio ; his mother's was Elisabetta Mini. He was the third of their sons, and received an excellent education under his uncle, Georgio Antonio Vespucci, a learned friar of the fraternity of San Marco, who was instructor to several illustrious personages of that period.

Amerigo Vespucci visited Spain, and took up his residence in Seville, to attend to some commercial transactions on account of the family of the Medici of Florence, and to repair, by his ingenuity, the losses and misfortunes of an unskilful brother\*.

The date of his arrival in Spain is uncertain ; but from comparing dates and circumstances mentioned in his letters, he must have been at Seville when Columbus returned from his first voyage.

Padre Stanislaus Canovai, professor of mathematics at Florence, who has published the life and voyages of Amerigo Vespucci, says that he was commissioned by king Ferdinand, and sent with Columbus in his second voyage in 1493. He states this on the authority of a passage in the

\* Bandini Vita d'Amerigo Vespucci.

Cosmography of Sebastian Munster, published at Basle in 1550\*: but Munster mentions Vespucci as having accompanied Columbus in his first voyage; the reference of Canovai is therefore incorrect; and the suggestion of Munster is disproved by the letters of Vespucci, in which he states his having been stimulated by the accounts brought of the newly discovered regions. He never mentions such a voyage in any of his letters, which he most probably would have done, or rather would have made it the subject of a copious letter, had he actually performed it.

The first notice of a positive form which we have of Vespucci as resident in Spain, is early in 1496. He appears, from documents in the royal archives at Seville, to have acted as agent or factor for the house of Juanoto Berardi, a rich Florentine merchant, resident in Seville; who had contracted to furnish the Spanish sovereigns with three several armaments, of four vessels each, for the service of the newly discovered countries. He may have been one of the principals in this affair, which was transacted in the name of this esta-

\* Cosm. Munst. p. 1108.

blished house. Berardi died in December, 1495, and in the following January we find Amerigo Vespucci attending to the concerns of the expedition, and settling with the masters of the ships for their pay and maintenance, according to the agreements made between them and the late Juanoto Berardi. On the 12th of January, 1496, he received on this account 10,000 maravedis from Bernardo Pinelo, the royal treasurer. He went on preparing all things for the despatch of four caravels, to sail under the same contract between the sovereigns and the house of Berardi; and sent them to sea on the 3d of February, 1496; but, on the 18th, they met with a storm, and were wrecked; the crews were saved, with the loss of only three men\*. While thus employed, Amerigo Vespucci, of course, had occasional opportunities of conversing with Columbus, with whom, according to the expression of the admiral himself, in one of his letters to his son Diego, he appears to have been always on friendly terms. From these conversations, and from his agency in these

\* These particulars are from manuscript memoranda, extracted from the royal archives, by the late accurate historian, Muñoz.

expeditions, he soon became excited to visit the newly discovered countries, and to participate in enterprises which were the theme of every tongue. Having made himself well acquainted with geographical and nautical science, he prepared to launch into the career of discovery. It was not very long before he carried this design into execution.

In 1498, Columbus, in his third voyage, discovered the coast of Paria, on *terra firma*; which he at that time imagined to be a great island, but that a vast continent lay immediately adjacent. He sent to Spain specimens of pearls found on this coast, and gave the most sanguine accounts of the supposed riches of the country.

In 1499, an expedition of four vessels, under command of Alonzo de Ojeda, was fitted out from Spain, and sailed for Paria, with the assistance of charts and letters sent to the government by Columbus. These were communicated to Ojeda by his patron, the bishop Fonseca, who had the superintendence of Indian affairs, and who furnished him also with a warrant to undertake the voyage.

It is presumed that Vespucci aided in fitting

out the armament, and sailed in a vessel belonging to the house of Berardi, and in this way was enabled to take a share in the gains and losses of the expedition; for Isabella, as queen of Castile, had strictly forbidden all strangers from trading with her transatlantic possessions, not even excepting the natives of the kingdom of Arragon.

This squadron visited Paria and several hundred miles of the coast, which they ascertained to be terra firma. They returned in June, 1500, and on the 18th of July, in that year, Amerigo Vespucci wrote an account of his voyage to Lorenzo di Pier Francisco de Medici, of Florence, which remained concealed in manuscript, until brought to light and published by Bandini, in 1745.

In his account of this voyage, and in every other narrative of his different expeditions, Vespucci never mentions any other person concerned in the enterprise. He gives the time of his sailing, and states that he went with two caravels, which were probably his share of the expedition, or rather vessels sent by the house of Berardi.



He gives an interesting narrative of the voyage, and of the various transactions with the natives, which corresponds in many substantial points with the accounts furnished by Ojeda and his mariners of their voyage, in a lawsuit hereafter mentioned.

In May, 1501, Vespucci, having suddenly left Spain, sailed in the service of Emanuel, king of Portugal; in the course of which expedition he visited the coast of Brazil. He gives an account of this voyage in a second letter to Lorenzo di Pier Francisco de Medici, which also remained in manuscript, until published by Bartolozzi, in 1789\*.

No record or notice of any such voyage, undertaken by Amerigo Vespucci, at the command of Emanuel, is to be found in the archives of the Torre do Tombo, the general archives of Portugal, which have been repeatedly and diligently searched for the purpose. It is singular, also, that his name is not to be found in any of the Portuguese historians, who in general were very

\* Bartolozzi Recherche Historico. Firenze, 1789.

particular in naming all navigators who held any important station among them, or rendered any distinguished services. That Vespucci did sail along the coasts, however, is not questioned. His nephew, after his death, in the course of evidence on some point in dispute, gave the correct altitude of Cape St. Augustine, which he said he had extracted from his uncle's journal.

In 1504, Vespucci wrote a third letter to the same Lorenzo de Medici, containing a more extended account of the voyage just alluded to, in the service of Portugal. This was the first of his narratives that appeared in print. It appears to have been published in Latin, in Strasburgh, as early as 1505, under the title of "*Americus Vesputius, de Orbe Antarctica per Regem Portugalliæ pridem invento* \*."

An edition of this letter was printed in Vicenza, in 1507, in an anonymous collection of voyages, edited by Francanzio di Monte Alboddo, an inhabitant of Vicenza. It was reprinted in Italian, in 1508, at Milan; and also in Latin, in

\* Panzer, tom. vi. p. 33. apud *Esame critico*, p. 88. Anotazione 1.

a book entitled *Itinerarium Portugalensium*. In making the present illustration, the Milan edition in Italian\* has been consulted, and also a Latin translation of it, by Simon Grinæus, in his *Novus Orbis*, published at Basle, in 1532. It relates entirely to the first voyage of Vespucci, from Lisbon to the Brazils, in 1501.

It is from this voyage to the Brazils that Amerigo Vespucci was first considered the discoverer of terra firma; and his name was at first applied to these southern regions, though afterwards extended to the whole continent. The merits of his voyage were, however, greatly exaggerated.

\* This rare book, in the possession of O. Rich, Esq., is believed to be the oldest printed collection of voyages extant. It has not the pages numbered, the sheets are merely marked with a letter of the alphabet at the foot of each eighth page. It contains the earliest account of the voyages of Columbus, from his first departure, until his arrival at Cadiz in chains. The letter of Vespucci, to Lorenzo de Medici, occupies the fifth book of this little volume. It is stated to have been originally written in Spanish, and translated into Italian by a person of the name of Jocondo. An earlier edition is stated to have been printed in Venice, by Alberto Vercellese, in 1504. The author is said to have been Angelo Trivigiani, secretary to the Venetian ambassador in Spain. This Trivigiani appears to have collected many of the particulars of the voyages of Columbus from the manuscript *Decades* of Peter Martyr, who erroneously lays the charge of the plagiarism to Aloysius Cadamosto, whose voyages are inserted in the same collection. The book was entitled, "*Libretto di tutta la Navigazione del Re de Spagna, delle Isole, e Terreni nuovamente trovati.*"

The Brazils had been previously discovered, and formally taken possession of for Spain, in 1500, by Pinzon ; and also in the same year, by Pedro Alvarez Cabral, on the part of Portugal ; circumstances unknown, however, to Vespucci and his associates. The country remained in possession of Portugal, in conformity to the line of demarcation agreed on between the two nations.

Vespucci made a second voyage in the service of Portugal. He says, that he commanded a caravel in a squadron of six vessels, destined for the discovery of Malacca ; which they had heard to be the great depôt and magazine of all the trade between the Ganges and the Indian sea. Such an expedition did sail about this time, under the command of Gonzalo Coelho. The squadron sailed, according to Vespucci, on the 10th of May, 1503. It stopped at the Cape de Verde islands for refreshments, and afterwards sailed by the coast of Sierra Leone ; but was prevented from landing by contrary winds and a turbulent sea. Standing to the south-west, they ran three hundred leagues, until they were three degrees

to the southward of the equinoctial line, where they discovered an uninhabited island, about two leagues in length and one in breadth. Here, on the 10th of August, by mismanagement, the commander of the squadron ran his vessel on a rock, and lost her. While the other vessels were assisting to save the crew and property from the wreck, Amerigo Vespucci was despatched in his caravel, to search for a safe harbour in the island. He departed in his vessel, without his long-boat, and with less than half of his crew, the rest having gone in the boat to the assistance of the wreck. Vespucci found a harbour, but waited in vain for several days for the arrival of the ships. Standing out to sea, he met with a solitary vessel, and learnt that the ship of the commander had sunk, and the rest had proceeded onwards. In company with this vessel, he stood for the Brazils, according to a command of the king, in case that any vessel should be parted from the fleet. Arriving on the coast, he discovered the famous bay of All Saints, where he remained upwards of two months, in hopes of being joined by the rest of the fleet. He at

length ran 260 leagues farther south, where he remained five months, building a fort, and taking in a cargo of Brazil wood. Then, leaving in the fortress a garrison of twenty-four men, with arms and ammunition, he set sail for Lisbon, where he arrived in June, 1504\*. The commander of the squadron, and the other four ships, were never heard of afterwards.

Vespucci does not appear to have received the reward from the king of Portugal that his services merited; for we find him at Seville early in 1505, on his way to the Spanish court, in quest of employment; and he was bearer of a letter from Columbus to his son Diego, dated February 5, which, while it speaks warmly of him as a friend, intimates his having been unfortunate. The following is the letter.

“ MY DEAR SON,

“ Diego Mendez departed from hence on Monday the third of this month. After his departure, I conversed with Amerigo Vespucci, the

\* Letter of Vespucci to Soderini or René. Edit. of Canovai.

bearer of this, who goes there (to court) summoned on affairs of navigation. Fortune has been adverse to him, as to many others. His labours have not profited him so much as they reasonably should have done. He goes on my account, and with much desire to do something that may result to my advantage, if within his power. I cannot ascertain here in what I can employ him that will be serviceable to me, for I do not know what may be there required. He goes with the determination to do all that is possible for me. See in what he may be of advantage, and co-operate with him ; that he may say and do every thing, and put his plans in operation ; and let all be done secretly, that he may not be suspected. I have said every thing to him that I can say touching the business ; and have informed him of the pay I have received, and what is due, &c\*.”

About this time Amerigo Vespucci received letters of naturalization from king Ferdinand, and shortly afterwards he and Pinzon were named

\* Navarrete Collec. Viag. t. i. p. 351.



captains of an armada about to be sent out in the spice trade, and to make discoveries. There is a royal order dated Toro, 11th April, 1505, for 12,000 maravedies, as an outfit for "Amerigo de Vespuche, resident of Seville." Preparations were made for this voyage, and vessels procured and fitted out; but it was eventually abandoned. There are memoranda existing concerning it, dated in 1505, 1507, and 1508; from which it appears that Amerigo Vespucci remained at Seville, attending to the fluctuating concerns of this squadron, until the destination of the vessels was changed, their equipments sold, and the accounts settled. During this time he had a salary of 30,000 maravedies. On the 22d of March, 1508, he received the appointment of principal pilot, with a salary of 75,000 maravedies. His chief duties were to prepare charts, examine pilots, superintend the fitting out of expeditions, and prescribe the route that vessels were to pursue in their voyages to the New World. He appears to have remained at Seville, and to have retained this office until his death, on the 22d of

February, 1512. His widow, Maria Corezo, enjoyed a pension of 10,000 maravedies. After his death, his nephew, Juan Vespucci, was nominated pilot, with a salary of 20,000 maravedies, commencing on the 22d of May, 1512. Peter Martyr speaks with high commendation of this young man. “ Young Vesputius is one to whom Americus Vesputius, his uncle, left the exact knowledge of the mariner’s faculties, as it were by inheritance, after his death ; for he was a very expert master in the knowledge of his carde, his compasse, and the elevation of the pole starre by the quadrant. \* \* \* \* Vesputius is my very familiar friend, and a wittie young man, in whose company I take great pleasure, and therefore use him oftentymes for my guest. He hath also made many voyages into these coasts, and diligently noted such things as he hath seen \*.”

Vespucci the nephew continued in this situation during the lifetime of Fonseca, who had been the patron of his uncle and his family. He was divested of his pay and his employ, by a letter of

\* S. Martyr, Decad. III. l. 5.—Eden’s English Trans.

the council, dated the 18th of March, 1525, shortly after the death of the bishop. No further notice of Vespucci is to be found in the archives of the Indies.

Such is a brief view of the career of Amerigo Vespucci ; it remains to notice the points in controversy. Shortly after his return from his last expedition to the Brazils, he wrote a letter, dated Lisbon, 4th of September, 1504, containing a summary account of all his voyages. This letter is of special importance to the matters under investigation, as it is the only one known that relates the disputed voyage, which would establish him as the discoverer of terra firma. It appears to have been written in Latin, and was addressed to René, duke of Lorraine, who assumed the title of king of Sicily and Jerusalem.

The earliest known edition of this letter was published in Latin in 1507, at St. Diez, in Lorraine. A copy of it has been found in the library of the Vatican (No. 9688.) by the Abbé Cancellieri. In preparing the present illustration, a reprint of this letter in Latin has been consulted,

inserted in the *Novus Orbis* of Grinæus, published at Basle in 1532. The letter contains a spirited narrative of four voyages, which he asserts to have made to the New World. In the prologue he excuses the liberty of addressing king René, by calling to his recollection the ancient intimacy of their youth, when studying the rudiments of science together, under the paternal uncle of the voyager; and adds, that, if the present narratives should not altogether please his majesty, he must plead to him, as Pliny said to Mecænas, “that he used formerly to be amused with his triflings.”

In the prologue to this letter, he informs René that affairs of commerce had brought him to Spain, where he had experienced the various changes of fortune attendant on such transactions, and was induced to abandon that pursuit, and direct his labours to objects of a more elevated and stable nature. He therefore purposed to contemplate various parts of the world, and to behold the marvels which it contains. To this object both time and place were favourable; for king Ferdinand was then preparing four vessels for the discovery of new lands in the west, and appointed

him among the number of those who went in the expedition. "We departed," he adds, "from the port of Cadiz, May 20, 1497, taking our course on the great ocean; in which voyage we employed eighteen months, discovering many lands and innumerable islands, chiefly inhabited, unknown to antiquity."

A duplicate of this letter appears to have been sent at the same time (written, it is said, in Italian) to Piere Soderini, afterwards gonfalonier of Florence, which was some years subsequently published in Italy, not earlier than 1510, and entitled "*Lettera de Amerigo Vespucci, delle Isole nuovamente trovate in quatro suoi viaggi.*" We have consulted the edition of this letter in Italian, inserted in the publication of Padre Stanislaus Canovai, already referred to.

It has been suggested by an Italian writer, that this letter was written by Vespucci to Soderini only, and the address altered to king René, through the flattery or mistake of the Lorraine editor, without perceiving how unsuitable the reference to former intimacy intended for Soderini was when applied to a sovereign. The person

making this remark can hardly have read the prologue to the Latin edition, in which the title of “your majesty” is frequently repeated, and the term “illustrious king” employed. It was first published also in Lorraine, the domains of René; and the publisher would not probably have presumed to take such a liberty with his sovereign’s name. It becomes a question, whether Vespucci addressed the same letter to king René and to Piere Soderini, both of them having been educated with him, or whether he sent a copy of this letter to Soderini, which subsequently found its way into print. The address to Soderini may have been substituted through mistake by the Italian publisher. Neither of the publications could have been made under the supervision of Vespucci.

The voyage specified in this letter, as having taken place in 1497, is the great point in controversy. It is strenuously asserted that no such voyage took place; and that the first expedition of Vespucci to the coast of Paria was in the enterprise commanded by Ojeda in 1499. The log-books of the armada existing in the archives of the Indies at Seville have been diligently examined;

but no record of such voyage has been found, nor any official documents that relate to it. Those most experienced in Spanish colonial regulations insist that no command like that pretended by Vespucci could have been given to a stranger, until he had first received letters of naturalization from the sovereigns for the kingdom of Castile; and he did not obtain such until 1505, when they were granted to him as preparatory to giving him the command in conjunction with Pinzon.

His account of a voyage made by him in 1497, therefore, is alleged to be a fabrication for the purpose of claiming the discovery of Paria; or rather it is affirmed, that he has divided the voyage which he actually made with Ojeda in 1499 into two; taking a number of incidents from his real voyage, altering them a little, and enlarging them with descriptions of the countries and people, so as to make a plausible narrative, which he gives as a distinct voyage; and antedates his departure to 1497, so as to make himself appear the first discoverer of Paria.

In support of this charge, various coincidences have been pointed out between his voyage said to



have taken place in 1497, and that described in his first letter to Lorenzo de Medicis as being made in 1499. These coincidences are with respect to places visited, transactions and battles with the natives, and the number of Indians carried to Spain and sold as slaves.

But the credibility of this voyage has been put to a stronger test. About 1508, a suit was instituted against the crown of Spain by Don Diego, son and heir of Columbus, for the government of certain parts of Terra Firma, and for a share in the revenue rising from them, conformably to the capitulations made between the sovereigns and his father. It was the object of the crown to disprove the discovery of the coast of Paria and the Pearl Islands by Columbus, as it was maintained that unless he had discovered them, the claim of his heir with respect to them would be of no validity.

In the course of this suit, a particular examination of witnesses took place in 1512-13, in the fiscal court. Alonzo de Ojeda, and nearly a hundred other persons, were interrogated on oath; that voyager having been the first to visit the coast of Paria after Columbus had left it, and that

within a very few months. The depositions of these witnesses are still extant in the archives of the Indies at Seville, amongst the papers belonging to the admiral Don Luis Colon, and forming part of the proceedings relating to the preservation of his privileges, from 1515 to 1564. The author of the present work has two several copies of these interrogatories lying before him. One made by the late historian Muñoz, and the other made in 1826, and signed by Don Tote de la Higuera y Lara, keeper of the general archives of the Indies in Seville. In the course of this testimony, the fact that Amerigo Vespucci accompanied Ojeda in this voyage of 1499 appears manifest, first from the deposition of Ojeda himself. The following are the words of the record: “ In this voyage, which this said witness made, he took with him Juan de la Cosa and Morigo Vespuche (Amerigo Vespucci), and other pilots\*.” Another argument is drawn from the coincidence of many parts of the narrative of Vespucci with events in this voyage of Ojeda. Among these coincidences, one is par-

\* En este Viage que este dicho testigo hizo trujo consigo a Juan de la Cosa piloto e Morigo Vespuche e otros pilotos.

ticularly striking. Vespucci, in his letter to Lorenzo de Medici, and also in that to René or Soderini, says that his ships, after leaving the coast of Terra Firma, stopped at Hispaniola, where they remained about two months and a half procuring provisions, during which time, he adds, we had many perils and troubles with the very Christians who were in that island with Columbus (and I believe through envy\*.)

Now it is well known that Ojeda passed some time on the western end of the island, victualing his ships; and that serious dissensions took place between him and the Spaniards in those parts, and the party sent by Columbus under the command of Roldan to keep a watch upon his movements. If then Vespucci, as is stated upon oath, really accompanied Ojeda in this voyage, the inference appears almost irresistible, that he had not made the previous voyage in 1497. For the fact would have been well known

\* Por la necessita del mantenimiento fummo all' Isola d' Antiglia (Hispaniola) che a questa che discoperse Cristoval Colombo piu anni fà, dove facemmo molto mantenimento e stemmo due mesi e 17 giorni, dove passammo molti pericoli e travagli con li medesimi Cristiani que in questo isola stavanno col Colombo (credo per invidia).

Letter of Vespucci. Edit. of Canovai.

to Ojeda ; he would have considered Vespucci as the original discoverer, and would have had no motive for depriving him of the merit of it to give it to Columbus, with whom Ojeda was not upon friendly terms.

Ojeda, however, expressly declares that the coast had been discovered by Columbus. On being asked how he knew the fact, he replied, because he saw the chart of the country discovered, which Columbus sent at the time to the king and queen, and that he came off immediately on a voyage of discovery, and found what was therein set down as discovered by the admiral was correct\*.

Another witness, Bernaldo de Haro, states, that he had been with the admiral, and had written (or rather copied) a letter for the admiral to the king and queen, designating, in an accompanying chart, the track by which he had arrived at Paria ; and that this witness had heard that from this

\* Preguntado como lo sabe, dijo, que lo sabe porque vio este testigo la figura que el dicho Almirante al dicho tiempo embio a Castilla al Rey e Reina nuestros Señores de lo que habia descubierta, y porque este testigo luego vino a descubrir y hallo que era verdad lo que dicho tiene que el dicho Almirante descubrio.

chart others had been made, and that Pedro Alonzo, Niño, and Ojeda, and others who had since visited these countries, had been guided by the same\*.

Francisco de Morales, one of the best and most credible of all the pilots, testified that he saw a sea chart which Columbus had made of the coast of Paria, *and he believed that all governed themselves by it.*

Numerous witnesses examined in this suit testify to the fact that Paria was first discovered by Columbus. Las Casas, who has been at the pains of counting them, says that the fact was established by twenty-five eye witnesses, and sixty ear witnesses. Many of them testify also, that the coast south of Paria, and that extending west to the island of Margarita away to Venezuela, which Vespucci states to have been discovered by himself in 1497, was now first discovered by Ojeda,

\* Este testigo escribió una carta que el almirante escribiera a el Rey e Reina N.N.S.S. haciendo les saber las perlas e cosas que habia hallado, y le embio señalado con la dicha carta in una carta de marear, los rumbos e vientos pr. donde habia llegado a la Paria, e que este testigo oyo decir como pr. aquella carta se havian hecho otras ó pr. ellas havian venido Pedro Alonzo Merino (Niño) e Ojeda, e otros que despues han ido a aquellas partes.

MS. Process of D. Diego Colon. pregunta 9.

and had never before been visited either by the admiral, "or any other Christian whatever."

Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal says, that all the voyages of discovery which were made to the Terra Firma, were made by persons who had sailed with the admiral, or been benefited by his instruction and directions, following the course he had laid down \*; and the same is testified by many other pilots and mariners of reputation and experience.

It would be a singular circumstance if none of these witnesses, many of whom must have sailed in the same squadron with Vespucci along this coast in 1499, should have known that he had discovered and explored it two years previously. If that had really been the case, what motive could he have for concealing the fact? and why, if they knew it, should they not proclaim it? Vespucci states his voyage in 1497 to have been made with four caravels; that they returned in

\* Que en todos los viages que algunos hicieron descubriendo en la dicha tierra que ovieron navegado con el dicho Almirante y a ellos mostro muchas cosas de marear, y ellos por imitacion e industria del dicho Almirante las aprendian y aprendieron e siguiendo ag<sup>o</sup>. que el dicho Almirante los habia mostrado, hicieron los viages que descubrieron en la Tierra Firme.



October, 1498, and that he sailed again with two caravels in May, 1499 (the date of Ojeda's departure). Many of the mariners would therefore have been present in both voyages. Why, too, should Ojeda and the other pilots guide themselves by the charts of Columbus, when they had a man on board so learned in nautical science, and who, from his own recent observation, was practically acquainted with the coast? Not a word, however, is mentioned of the voyage and discovery of Vespucci by any of the pilots, though every other navigator and discoverer is cited: nor does there ever a seaman appear who has accompanied him in his asserted voyage.

Another strong circumstance against the reality of this voyage is, that it was not brought forward in this trial to defeat the claims of the heirs of Columbus. Vespucci states the voyage to have been undertaken with the knowledge and countenance of King Ferdinand; it must therefore have been avowed and notorious. Vespucci was living at Seville in 1508, at the time of the commencement of this suit, and for four years afterwards, a



salaried servant of the crown. Many of the pilots and mariners must have been at hand who sailed with him in his pretended enterprise. If this voyage had once been proved, it would completely have settled the question, as far as concerned the coast of Paria, in favour of the crown. Yet no testimony appears ever to have been taken from Vespucci while living; and when the interrogatories were made in the fiscal court in 1512-13, not one of his seamen is brought up to give evidence. A voyage so important in its nature, and so essential to the question in dispute, is not even alluded to; while useless pains are taken to wrest evidence from the voyage of Ojeda, undertaken at a subsequent period.

It is a circumstance worthy of notice, that Vespucci commences his first letter to Lorenzo de Medici in 1500, within a month after his return from the voyage he had actually made to Paria, and apologizes for his long silence, by saying that nothing had occurred worthy of mention (*“ e gran tempo die non ho scritto a vostra magnificenza, e non lo ha causato altra cosa nessuna,*

salvo non mi essere accorso cosa degna di memoria”), and proceeds eagerly to tell him the wonders he had witnessed in the expedition from which he had but just returned. It would be a singular forgetfulness to say that nothing had occurred of importance, if he had made a previous voyage of eighteen months in 1497-8 to this newly discovered world ; and it would be almost equally strange that he should not make the slightest allusion to it in this letter.

It has been the endeavour of the author to examine this question dispassionately ; and after considering the statements and arguments advanced on either side, he cannot resist a conviction that the voyage stated to have been made in 1497 did not take place, and that Vespucci has no title to the first discovery of the coast of Paria.

The question is extremely perplexing, from the difficulty of assigning sufficient motives for so gross a deception. When Vespucci wrote his letters, there was no doubt entertained but that Columbus had discovered the main land in his first voyage ; Cuba being always considered the extre-

mity of Asia, until circumnavigated in 1508. Vespucci may have supposed Brazil, Paria, and the rest of that coast, part of a distinct continent, and have been anxious to arrogate to himself the fame of its discovery. It has been asserted, that, on his return from his voyage to the Brazils, he prepared a maritime chart, in which he gave his name to that part of the main land ; but this assertion does not appear to be well substantiated. It would rather seem that his name was given to that part of the continent by others, as a tribute paid to his supposed merit, in consequence of having read his own account of his voyages \*.

It is singular that Fernando, the son of Columbus, in his biography of his father, should bring no charge against Vespucci of endeavouring to supplant the admiral in this discovery. Herrera has been cited as the first to bring the accusation, in his *History of the Indies*, first published in

\* The first suggestion of the name appears to have been in the Latin work already cited, published in St. Diez in Lorraine in 1507, in which was inserted the letter of Vespucci to king René. The author, after speaking of the other three parts of the world, Asia, Africa, and Europe, recommends that the fourth shall be called Amerige or America, after Vespucci, whom he imagined its discoverer.

1601, and has been much criticised in consequence by the advocates of Vespucci, as making the charge on his mere assertion. But, in fact, Herrera did but copy what he found written by Las Casas, who had the proceedings of the fiscal court lying before him, and was moved to indignation against Vespucci, by what he considered proofs of great imposture.

It has been suggested, that Vespucci was instigated to this deception at the time when he was seeking employment in the colonial service of Spain; that he did it to conciliate the bishop Fonseca, who was desirous of any thing that might injure the interests of Columbus. In corroboration of this opinion, the patronage is cited which was ever shown by Fonseca to Vespucci and his family. This is not, however, a satisfactory reason, since it does not appear that the bishop ever made any use of the fabrication. Perhaps some other means might be found of accounting for this spurious narration, without implicating the veracity of Vespucci. It may have been the blunder of some editor, or the interpolation of some book-

maker, eager, as in the case of Trivigiani with the manuscripts of Peter Martyr, to gather together disjointed materials, and fabricate a work to gratify the prevalent passion of the day.

In the various editions of the letters of Vespucci, the grossest variations and inconsistencies in dates will be found, evidently the errors of hasty and careless publishers. Several of these have been judiciously corrected by the modern authors who have inserted these letters in their works \*. The same disregard to exactness which led to these blunders may have produced the interpolation of this voyage, garbled out of the letters of Vespucci, and the accounts of other voyagers. This is merely suggested as a possible mode of accounting for what appears so decidedly to be a

\* An instance of these errors may be cited in the edition of the letter of Amerigo Vespucci to king René, inserted by Grinæus in his *Novus Orbis* in 1532. In this Vespucci is made to state that he sailed from Cadiz, May 20, MCCCCXCVII (1497), that he was eighteen months absent, and returned to Cadiz, October 15, MCCCCXCIX (1499), which would constitute an absence of twenty-nine months. He states his departure from Cadiz, on his second voyage, Sunday, May 11, MCCCCLXXXIX (1489), which would have made his second voyage precede his first by eight years. If we substitute 1499 for 1489, the departure, on his second voyage would still precede his return from his first by five months. Canovai, in his edition, has altered the date of the first return to 1498, to limit the voyage to eighteen months.

fabrication, yet which we are loth to attribute to a man of the good sense, the character, and the reputed merit of Vespucci.

After all, this is a question more of curiosity than of real moment, although it is one of those perplexing points about which grave men will continue to write weary volumes, until the subject acquires a fictitious importance from the mountain of controversy heaped upon it. It has become a question of local pride with the literati of Florence; and they emulate each other with patriotic zeal to vindicate the fame of their distinguished countryman. This zeal is laudable when kept within proper limits; but it is to be regretted that some of them have so far been heated by controversy, as to become irascible against the very memory of Columbus, and to seek to disparage his general fame, as if the ruin of it would add anything to the reputation of Vespucci. This is discreditable to their discernment and their liberality; it injures their cause, and shocks the feelings of mankind, who will not willingly see a name like that of Columbus lightly or petulantly assailed in

the course of these literary contests. It is a name consecrated in history, and is no longer the property of a city, or a state, or a nation, but of the whole world.

Neither should those who have a proper sense of the merit of Columbus put any part of his great renown at issue upon this minor dispute. Whether or not he was the first discoverer of Paria was a question of interest to his heirs, as a share in the government and revenues of that country depended upon it ; but it is of no importance to his fame. In fact, the European who first reached the main land of the New World was most probably Sebastian Cabot, a native of Venice, sailing in the employ of England. In 1497 he coasted its shores from Labrador to Florida ; yet neither the Venetians nor the English have set up any pretensions on his account. The glory of Columbus embraces the discovery of the whole western world ; others may subdivide it. With respect to him, Vespucci is as Iañez Pinzon, Bastides, Ojeda, Cabot, and the crowd of secondary discoverers that followed in his track. When



Columbus first touched the shore of the western hemisphere, he had achieved his enterprise, he had accomplished all that was necessary to his fame : the great problem was solved, the New World was discovered.



MARTIN ALONZO PINZON.

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IN the course of the trial in the fiscal court between Don Diego and the crown, a feeble attempt was made to depreciate the merit of Columbus, and to ascribe the success of the great enterprise of discovery to the intelligence and spirit of Martin Alonzo Pinzon.

Arias Perez Pinzon, son of Martin Alonzo, declared, that “ being once in Rome with his father on commercial affairs, before the time of the discovery, they had frequent conversations with a person learned in cosmography, who was in the service of pope Innocent VIII., and that, being in the library of the pope, this person showed them many manuscripts, from one of which his father gathered intimation of these new lands; for there was a passage by an historian as old as the time of Solomon, which said, ‘ Navigate the Mediterranean Sea to the end of Spain,

and thence towards the setting of the sun in a direction between north and south, until ninety-five degrees of distance, and you will find the land of Cipango, fertile and abundant, and in greatness equal to Africa and Europe.' A copy of this writing, he added, his father brought from Rome, with an intention of going in search of that land, and frequently expressed such determination; and that, when Columbus came to Palos with his project of discovery, Martin Alonzo Pinzon showed him the manuscript, which encouraged him greatly in his enterprise; and moreover he furnished him with money to go to court to make his propositions." It is probable that this manuscript, of which Arias Perez gives so vague an account from recollection, may have been the work of Marco Polo, which Columbus had already seen, with accompanying speculations concerning Ophir and Tarshish, and the voyages made by the ships of Solomon; and it is also questionable whether this visit of Martin Alonzo Pinzon to Rome was not after his mind had been heated by conversations with Columbus in the convent of La Rabida: Arias Perez always men-

tions the manuscript as imparted to Columbus after he had come to Palos, with an intention of proceeding on the discovery.

Several witnesses concur in declaring that Martin Alonzo Pinzon was all efficient in procuring ships and mariners for Columbus. Among others, Francisco Garcia Vallego testified, that, had it not been for Martin Alonzo Pinzon, who aided him in the enterprise, together with his relations and friends, the admiral could never have sailed on his voyage, for nobody would have gone with him; but that, through the great desire which Martin Alonzo had to serve the sovereigns, he entreated his brother and this witness, and other persons, to go with him, and that therefore this witness engaged in the voyage.

The son of Pinzon, and his friend and adherent, this same Francisco Garcia, went so far as to intimate, that had it not been for Martin Alonzo, the admiral would have turned back in the course of his voyage, when he had run seven or eight hundred leagues without finding land, and was threatened with mutiny and open rebellion on board of his ship. The characteristic fortitude

and perseverance of Columbus, as well as the daily minutes of his journal, furnish sufficient refutation of this charge, which the partisans of Pinzon would have been much gratified to establish.

It appears beyond a doubt, however, that Martin Alonzo Pinzon was an able and enterprising navigator; that he entered with zeal into the great idea of Columbus, and was of essential service in fitting out the armament. In the whole course of the voyage out he acted with spirit and fidelity, seconding and encouraging the admiral when harassed by the murmurs and menaces of his crew. It was only after land had been discovered, and when the prospect of immediate treasures were held out, that the cupidity of Pinzon became aroused, that he forgot the subordination so indispensable to the success of every enterprise, and of such vital importance in an expedition of this extraordinary and critical nature.

No. XI.

RUMOUR OF THE PILOT SAID TO HAVE DIED IN  
THE HOUSE OF COLUMBUS.

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AMONG the various attempts to injure Columbus by those who were envious of his fame, was one intended to destroy all his merit as an original discoverer. It was said that he had received information of the existence of land in the western parts of the ocean, from a tempest-tost pilot, who had been driven there by violent easterly winds, and who, on his return to Europe, had died in the house of Columbus, leaving in his possession the chart and journal of his voyage, by which he was guided to his discovery.

This story was first noticed by Oviedo, a contemporary of Columbus, in his History of the Indies, published in 1535. He mentions it as a rumour circulating among the vulgar without foundation in truth.

Fernando Lopez de Gomara first brought it



forward against Columbus, in his *History of the Indies*, published in 1552. He repeats the rumour in the vaguest terms, manifestly from Oviedo, but without the contradiction given to it by that author. He says that the name and country of the pilot were unknown, some terming him an Andalusian, sailing between the Canaries and Madeira, others a Biscayan trading to England and France; and others a Portuguese, voyaging between Lisbon and Mina, on the coast of Guinea. He expresses equal uncertainty whether the pilot brought the caravel to Portugal, to Madeira, or to one of the Azores. The only point on which the circulators of the rumour agreed, was that he died in the house of Columbus. Gomara adds, that by this event Columbus was led to undertake his voyage to the new countries\*.

The other early historians who mention Columbus and his voyages, and were his contemporaries, viz. Sabellicus, Peter Martyr, Giustiniani, Bernaldos, commonly called the curate of Los Palacios, Las Casas, Fernando the son of the admiral, and the anonymous author of a voyage of Co-

\* Gomara, *Hist. Ind.* c. 14.

lumbus, translated from the Italian into Latin, by Madreguno \*, are all silent to this report.

Benzoni, whose History of the New World was published 1565, repeats the story from Gomara, with whom he was contemporary, but decidedly expresses his opinion, that Gomara had mingled up much falsehood with some truth, for the purpose of detracting from the fame of Columbus, through jealousy that any one but a Spaniard should enjoy the honour of the discovery †.

Acosta notices the circumstance slightly in his Natural and Moral History of the Indies, published in 1591, and takes it evidently from Gomara ‡.

Mariana, in his History of Spain, published in 1592, also mentions it, but expresses a doubt of its truth, and derives his information manifestly from Gomara §.

\* Navigatio Christophori Columbi, Madrugnano Interprete. It is contained in a collection of voyages, called, *Novus Orbis Regionum*, edition of 1555, but was originally published in Italian, as written by Montalbodo Francanzana (or Francapano de Montaldo) in a collection of voyages, entitled *Nuevo Mundo*, in Vicenza, 1507.

† Girolamo Benzoni *Hist. del Nuevo Mundo*, l. i. fo. 12. in Venetia, 1572.

‡ Padre Joseph de Acosta, *Hist. Ind.* l. i. c. 19.

§ Juan de Mariana, *Hist. España*, l. 26. c. 3.

Herrera, who published his History of the Indies in 1601, takes no notice of the story. By not noticing it he may be considered as rejecting it ; for he is distinguished for his minuteness ; and he was well acquainted with Gomara's history, which he expressly contradicts on a point of considerable interest \*.

Garcilasso de la Vega, a native of Cusco in Peru, revived the tale with very minute particulars, in his Commentaries of the Incas, published in 1609. He tells it smoothly and circumstantially ; fixes the date of the occurrence, 1484, “ one year more or less ;” states the name of the unfortunate pilot, Alonzo Sanchez de Huelva ; the destination of his vessel, from the Canaries to Madeira ; and the unknown land to which they were driven, the island of Hispaniola. The pilot, he says, landed, took an altitude, and wrote an account of all he saw, and all that had occurred in the voyage. He then took in wood and water, and set out to seek his way home. He succeeded in returning, but the voyage was long and tempestuous, and twelve died of hunger and fatigue, out of seven-

\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. decad. II. lib. 3. cap. 1.

teen, the original number of the crew. The five survivors arrived at Tercera, where they were hospitably entertained by Columbus, but all died in his house, in consequence of the hardships which they had sustained, the pilot last, leaving his host heir to his papers. Columbus kept them profoundly secret, and, by pursuing the route therein prescribed, obtained the credit of discovering the New World \*.

Such are the material points of the circumstantial relation furnished by Garcilasso de la Vega, 120 years after the event. In regard to authority, he recollects to have heard the story when he was a child, as a subject of conversation between his father and the neighbours, and he refers to the histories of the Indies by Acosta and Gomara for confirmation. As the conversations to which he listened must have taken place sixty or seventy years after the date of the report, there had been sufficient time for the vague rumours to become arranged into a regular narrative; and thus we have not only the name, country, and

\* *Commentarios de los Incas*, lib. 1. c. 3.

destination of the pilot, but also the name of the unknown land to which his vessel was driven.

This account, given by Garcilasso de la Vega, has been adopted by many old historians, who have felt a confidence in the peremptory manner in which he relates it, and in the authorities to whom he refers\*. These have been echoed by others of more recent date, and thus a weighty charge of fraud and imposture has been accumulated against Columbus, apparently supported by a crowd of respectable accusers.

The whole charge is to be traced to Gomara, who loosely repeated a vague rumour, without noticing the pointed contradictions given to it

\* Names of historians who have either adopted this story in detail, or the charge against Columbus, drawn from it.

Bernardo Aldrete, *Antigüedad de España*, l. 4. c. 17. f. 567.

Roderigo Caro, *Antigüedad*, lib. 3. cap. 76.

Juan de Solorzano, *Ind. Jure*, tom. i. l. 1. c. 5.

Fernando Pizarro. *Varones*, *Illust. del Nuevo Mundo*, c. 2.

Agostino Torniel, *Annual. Sacr.* tom. i. *Ann. Mund.* 1931, No. 48.

Pet. Damarez, or De Maliz, *Dial.* 4. de *Var. Hist.* cap. 4.

Gregorio Garcia, *Orig. de los Indios*, lib. i. c. 4. § 1.

Juan de Torquemada, *Monarch. Ind.* l. 18. c. 1.

John Baptiste Riccioli, *Geograph. Reform.* l. 3.

To this list of old authors may be added many others of more recent date.

seventeen years before, by Oviedo, an ear-witness, from whose book he appears to have actually gathered the report.

It is to be remarked that Gomara bears the character among historians, of inaccuracy and of great credulity in adopting unfounded stories\*.

It is unnecessary to give further refutation to this charge, especially as it is clear that Columbus communicated his idea of discovery to Paulo Toscanelli of Florence in 1474, ten years previous to the date assigned by Garcilasso de la Vega for this occurrence.

\* Hijos de Sevilla, No. 2. p. 42. let. F. The same is stated in Bibliotheca Hispania Nova, l. 1. f. 437. Bernal Diaz del Castillo, Hist. de la Conquist de la Nueva España. fin de cap. 18. Juan Bautista Munos, Hist. N. Mundo, Prologo, xviii.





No. XII.

MARTIN BEHEM.

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THIS able geographer was born in Nuremberg, in Germany, about the commencement of the year 1430. His ancestors came from the circle of Pilsner, in Bohemia; hence he is called by some writers, Martin of Bohemia; and the resemblance of his own name to that of the country of his ancestors frequently occasions a confusion in the appellation.

It has been said by some that he studied under Philip Bervalde the elder, and by others, under John Muller, otherwise called Regiomontanus; though De Murr, who has made diligent inquiry into his history, discredits both assertions. According to a correspondence between Behem and his uncle, discovered of late years by De Murr, it appears that the early part of his life was devoted to commerce. Some have given him the credit of discovering the island of Fayal; but this is an error, arising probably from the circumstance, that

Job de Huertar, father-in-law of Behem, colonized that island in 1466.

He is supposed to have arrived at Portugal in 1481, while Alphonso V. was still on the throne : it is certain, that, shortly afterwards, he was in high repute for his science in the court of Lisbon, insomuch that he was one of the council appointed by king John II. to improve the art of navigation ; and by some he has received the whole credit of the memorable service rendered to commerce by that council, in the introduction of the astrolabe into nautical use.

In 1484, king John sent an expedition under Diego Cam, as Barros calls him, Cano according to others, to prosecute discoveries along the coast of Africa. In this expedition Behem sailed as cosmographer. They crossed the equinoctial line, discovered the coast of Congo, advanced to twenty-two dègrees forty-five minutes of south latitude \*, and erected two columns, on which were engraved the arms of Portugal, in the mouth of the river Zagra, in Africa, which thence, for some time, took the name of the river of Columns.

For the services rendered on this and on pre-

\* Murr, Notice sur M. Behaim.

vious occasions, it is said that Behem was knighted by king John in 1485, though no mention is made of such a circumstance in any of the contemporary historians. The principal proof of his having received this mark of distinction is his having given himself the title, on his own globe, of *Eques Lusitanus*.

In 1486 he married, at Fayal, the daughter of Job de Huertar, and is supposed to have remained there for some few years, where he had a son, named Martin, born in 1489. During his residence at Lisbon and Fayal, it is probable the acquaintance took place between him and Columbus to which Herrera and others allude; and the admiral may have heard from him some of the rumours current in the islands, of the productions of western lands floating to their shores.

In 1491 he returned to Nuremberg to see his family, and while there, in 1492, he finished a terrestrial globe, considered a masterpiece in those days, which he had undertaken at the request of the principal magistrates of his native city.

In 1493 he returned to Portugal, and from thence proceeded to Fayal.

In 1494, king John II., who had a high opinion of him, sent him to Flanders to his natural son prince George, the intended heir of his crown. In the course of his voyage, Behem was captured and carried to England, where he remained for three months detained by illness. Having recovered, he again put to sea, but was again captured by a corsair, and carried to France. Having ransomed himself, he proceeded to Antwerp and Bruges, but returned almost immediately to Portugal. Nothing more is known of him for several years, during which time it is supposed he remained with his family in Fayal, too old to make further voyages. In 1506 he went from Fayal to Lisbon, where he died.

The assertion that Behem had discovered the Western World previous to Columbus, in the course of the voyage with Cam, was founded on the misinterpretation of a passage interpolated in the chronicle of Hartmann Schedel, a contemporary writer. This passage mentions, that when the navigators were in the Southern Ocean, not far from the coast, and had passed the line, they came into another hemisphere, where, when they looked to-

wards the east, their shadows fell towards the south, on their right hand ; that here they discovered a new world, unknown until then, and which for many years had never been sought, except by the Genoese, and by them unsuccessfully.

“ *Hii duo, bono Deorum auspicio, mare meridionale sulcantes, a littore non longe evagantes, superato circulo equinocciali, in alterum orbem excepti sunt. Ubi ipsis stantibus orientem versus, umbra ad meridiem et dextram projiciebatur. Aperuère igitur suâ industriâ alium orbem hactenus nobis incognitum et multis annis, a nullis quam Januensibus, licet frustra temptatum.*”

These lines are part of a passage which it is said is interpolated by a different hand in the original manuscript of the chronicle of Schedel. De Murr assures us they are not to be found in the German translation of this book by George Alt, which was finished the 5th of October, 1493 : but even if they were, they merely relate to the discovery which Diego Cam made of the southern hemisphere, previously unknown, and of the coast of Africa beyond the equator, all which appeared like a new world, and as such was talked of at the

time. The Genoese alluded to, who had made an unsuccessful attempt, were Antonio de Nolle, with Bartholomew his brother, and Raphael de Nolle his nephew. Antonio was of a noble family, and, for some disgust, left his country and went to Lisbon with his before-mentioned relatives, in two caravels; from whence, sailing in the employ of Portugal, they discovered the island of St. Jago, &c.\*

This interpolated passage of Schedel was likewise inserted into the work *De Europâ sub Frederico III.* of Æneas Silvius, afterwards pope Pius II., who died in 1464, long before the voyage in question. The misinterpretation of this passage first gave rise to the incorrect assertion that Behem had discovered the New World prior to Columbus; as if it were possible that such a circumstance could have happened without Behem's laying claim to the glory of the discovery, and without the world immediately resounding with so important an event. This error had been adopted by various authors without due examination; some of whom had likewise taken from Magellan the credit of

\* Barros, *Decad.* I. l. ii. c. 1. Lisbon, 1552.

having discovered the strait which goes by his name, and had given it to Behem. The error was too palpable to be generally prevalent, but it was suddenly revived, in the year 1786, by a French gentleman of highly respectable character, of the name of Otto, then resident in New York, who addressed a letter to Dr. Franklin, to be submitted to the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, in which he undertook to establish the title of Behem to the discovery of the New World. His memoir was published in the Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. ii., for 1786, article No. 35, and has been copied into the journals of most of the nations of Europe.

The authorities cited by M. Otto in support of his assertion are generally fallacious, and for the most part given without particular specification. His assertion has been diligently and satisfactorily refuted by Don Christoval Cladera\*.

The grand proof of M. Otto is a globe which Behem made during his residence in Nuremburg, in 1492, the very year that Columbus set out on his first voyage of discovery. This globe, accord-

\* *Investigations Historicas*, Madrid, 1794.



ing to M. Otto, is still preserved in the library of Nuremburg, and on it are painted all the discoveries of Behem, which are so situated that they can be no other than the coast of Brazil and the Straits of Magellan. This authority staggered many, and, if supported, would demolish the claims of Columbus.

Unluckily for M. Otto, in his description of the globe, he depended on the inspection of a correspondent. The globe in the library of Nuremburg was made in 1520, by John Schoener, professor of mathematics\*, long after the discoveries and death of Columbus and Behem. The real globe of Behem, made in 1492, does not contain any of the islands or shores of the New World, and thus proves that he was totally unacquainted with them. A copy or planisphere of Behem's globe is given by Cladera in his Investigations.

\* Cladera, Investig. Hist. p. 115.

No. XIII.

VOYAGES OF THE SCANDINAVIANS.

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MANY elaborate dissertations have been written to prove that discoveries were made by the Scandinavians on the northern coast of America long before the era of Columbus; but the subject appears still to be wrapped in much doubt and obscurity.

It has been asserted that the Norwegians, as early as the ninth century, discovered a great tract of land to the west of Iceland, which they called Grand Iceland, but this has been pronounced a fabulous tradition. The most plausible account is one given by Snorro Sturleson, in his Saga or Chronicle of king Olaus. According to this writer, one Biorn of Iceland, sailing to Greenland in search of his father, from whom he had been separated by a storm, was driven by tempestuous weather far to the south-west, until he came in sight of a low country, covered with

wood, with an island in its vicinity. The weather becoming favourable, he turned to the north-east without landing, and arrived safe at Greenland. His account of the country he had beheld, it is said, excited the enterprise of Leif, son of Eric Rauda, or Redhead, the first settler of Greenland. A vessel was fitted out, and Leif and Biorn departed together in quest of this unknown land. They found a rocky and sterile island, to which they gave the name of Helleland, also a low sandy country covered with wood, to which they gave the name of Markland; and two days afterwards they observed a continuance of the coast, with an island to the north of it. This last they described as fertile, well wooded, producing agreeable fruits, and particularly grapes, a fruit with which they were unacquainted. On being informed by one of their companions, a German, of its qualities and name, they called the country, from it, Vinland. They ascended a river well stored with fish, particularly salmon, and came to a lake from which the river took its origin, where they passed the winter. The climate appeared to them mild and pleasant; being accustomed to the rigorous cli-

mates of the north. On the shortest day, the sun was eight hours above the horizon : hence it has been concluded that the country was about the 49th degree of north latitude, and was either Newfoundland, or some part of the coast of North America, about the Gulf of St. Lawrence\*. It is added that the relatives of Leif made several voyages to Vinland ; that they traded with the natives for furs ; and that, in 1121, a bishop named Eric went from Greenland to Vinland to convert the inhabitants to Christianity. From this time, says Forster, we know nothing of Vinland ; and there is every appearance that the tribe which still exists in the interior of Newfoundland, and which is so different from the other savages of North America, both in their appearance and mode of living, and always in a state of warfare with the Esquimaux of the northern coast, are descendants of the ancient Normans.

The author of the present work has not had the means of tracing this story to its original sources. He gives it on the authority of M. Malte-Brun and Mr. Forster. The latter extracts it from the

\* Forster's Northern Voyages, b. ii. c. 2.

Saga or Chronicle of Snorro, who was born in 1179, and wrote in 1215; so that his account was formed long after the event is said to have taken place. Forster says, the facts which we report have been collected from a great number of Icelandic manuscripts, and transmitted to us by Torfæus in his two works entitled, *Veteris Grœnlandiæ Descriptio*, Hafnia, 1706, and *Historia Winlandiæ Antiquæ*, Hafnia, 1705. Forster appears to have no doubt of the authenticity of the facts. As far as the author of the present work has had experience in tracing these stories of early discoveries of portions of the New World, he has generally found them very confident deductions, drawn from very vague and questionable facts. Learned men are too prone to give substance to mere shadows, when they assist some preconceived theory. Most of these accounts, when divested of the erudite comments of their editors, have proved little better than the traditionary fables, noticed in another part of this work, respecting the imaginary islands of St. Borondon and of the Seven Cities.

There is no great improbability, however, that

such enterprising and roving voyagers as the Scandinavians may have wandered to the northern shores of America about the coast of Labrador, or the shores of Newfoundland; and if the Icelandic manuscripts said to be of the thirteenth century, can be relied upon as genuine, free from modern interpolation, and correctly quoted, they would appear to prove the fact. But granting the truth of the alleged discoveries, they led to no more result than would the interchange of communication between the natives of Greenland and the Esquimaux. The knowledge of them appears not to have extended beyond their own nation, and to have been soon neglected and forgotten by themselves.

Another pretension to an early discovery of the American continent has been set up, founded on an alleged map and narrative of two brothers of the name of Zeno, of Venice; but it seems more invalid than those just mentioned. The following is the substance of this claim.

Nicolo Zeno, a noble Venetian, is said to have made a voyage to the north, in 1380, in a vessel fitted out at his own cost, intending to visit Eng-

land and Flanders ; but, meeting with a terrible tempest, was driven for many days he knew not whither, until he was cast away upon Friseland, an island much in dispute among geographers, but supposed to be the archipelago of the Feroe islands. The shipwrecked voyagers were assailed by the natives, but rescued by Zichmni, a prince of the islands, lying on the south side of Friseland, and duke of another district lying over-against Scotland. Zeno entered into the service of this prince, and aided him in conquering Friseland and other northern islands. He was soon joined by his brother, Antonio Zeno, who remained fourteen years in those countries.

During his residence in Friseland, Antonio Zeno wrote to his brother Carlo, in Venice, giving an account of a report brought by a certain fisherman about a land to the westward. According to the tale of this mariner, he had been one of a party who sailed from Friseland about twenty-six years before, in four fishing boats. Being overtaken by a mighty tempest, they were driven about the sea for many days until the boat containing himself and six companions was cast upon an



island called Estotiland, about one thousand miles from Friseland. They were taken by the inhabitants, and carried to a fair and populous city, where the king sent for many interpreters to converse with them, but none that they could understand, until a man was found who had likewise been cast away upon the coast, and who spoke Latin. They remained several days upon the island, which was rich and fruitful, abounding with all kinds of metals, and especially gold\*. There was a high mountain in the centre, from which flowed four rivers, which watered the whole country. The inhabitants were intelligent, and acquainted with the mechanical arts of Europe. They cultivated grain, made beer, and lived in houses built of stone. There were Latin books in the king's library, though the inhabitants had no knowledge of that language. They had many cities and castles, and carried on a trade with Greenland for pitch, sulphur, and peltry. Though much given to navigation, they were ignorant of the use of the compass, and

\* This account is taken from Hackluyt, vol. iii. p. 123. The passage about gold and other metals is not to be found in the original Italian of Ramusio (t. ii. p. 23), and is probably an interpolation.

finding the Friselanders acquainted with it, held them in great esteem ; and the king sent them with twelve barks to visit a country to the south called Drogeo. They had nearly perished in a storm, but were cast away upon the coast of Drogeo. They found the people to be cannibals, and were on the point of being killed and devoured, but were spared on account of their great skill in fishing.

The fisherman described this Drogeo as being a country of vast extent, or rather a new world ; that the inhabitants were naked and barbarous, but that far to the south-west there was a more civilized region and temperate climate, where the inhabitants had a knowledge of gold and silver, lived in cities, erected splendid temples to idols, and sacrificed human victims to them, which they afterwards devoured.

After the fisherman had resided many years on this continent, during which time he had passed from the service of one chieftain to another, and traversed various parts of it, certain boats of Estotiland arrived on the coasts of Drogeo. The fisherman went on board of them, acted as interpreter,

and followed the trade between the main land and Estotiland for some time, until he became very rich ; then he fitted out a bark of his own, and, with the assistance of some of the people of the island, made his way back across the thousand intervening miles of ocean, and arrived safe at Friseland. The account he gave of these countries determined Zichmni, the prince of Friseland, to send an expedition thither, and Antonio Zeno was to command it. Just before sailing, the fisherman, who was to have acted as guide, died ; but certain mariners who had accompanied him from Estotiland were taken in his place. The expedition sailed under the command of Zichmni ; the Venetian Zeno merely accompanied it. It was unsuccessful. After having discovered an island called Icaria, where they met with a rough reception from the inhabitants, and were obliged to withdraw, the ships were driven by a storm to Greenland. No record remains of any further prosecution of the enterprise.

The countries mentioned in the account of Zeno were laid down on a map originally engraved on wood. The island of Estotiland has been supposed, by M. Malte-Brun, to be Newfoundland ;

its partially civilized inhabitants, the descendants of the Scandinavian colonists of Vinland ; and the Latin books in the king's library, to be the remains of the library of the Greenland bishop who emigrated thither in 1121. Drogeo, according to the same conjecture, was Nova Scotia and New England. The civilized people to the south-west, who sacrificed human victims in rich temples, he surmises to have been the Mexicans, or some ancient nation of Florida or Louisiana.

The premises do not appear to warrant this deduction. The whole story abounds with improbabilities, not the least of which is the civilization prevalent among the inhabitants, their houses of stone, their European arts, the library of their king, no traces of which were to be found on this subsequent discovery. Not to mention the information about Mexico, penetrating through the numerous savage tribes of a vast continent. It is proper to observe that this account was not published until 1558, long after the discovery of Mexico. It was given to the world by Francisco Marcolini, a descendant of the Zeni, from the fragments of letters said to have been written by

Antonio Zeno to Carlo his brother. “ It grieves me,” says the editor, “ that the book and divers other writings concerning these matters are miserably lost ; for being but a child when they came to my hands, and not knowing what they were, I tore them and rent them in pieces, which now I cannot call to remembrance without exceeding grief\*.”

This garbled statement by Marcolini, derived considerable authority by being introduced by Abraham Ortelius, an able geographer, in his *Theatrum Orbis* ; but the whole story has been condemned by able commentators as a gross fabrication. Mr. Forster resents this as an instance of obstinate incredulity, saying that it is impossible to doubt the existence of the country of which Carlo Nicolo and Antonio Zeno talk ; as original acts in the archives of Venice prove that the chevalier undertook a voyage to the north ; that his brother Antonio followed him ; that Antonio traced a map which he brought back and hung up in his house, where it remained subject to public examination until the time of Marcolini, as an incontestable proof of the truth of what he ad-

\* Hackluyt, Collect. vol. iii. p. 127.

vanced. Granting all this, it merely proves that Antonio and his brother were at Friseland and Greenland. Their letters never assert that Zeno made the voyage to Estotiland. The fleet was carried by a tempest to Greenland, after which we hear no more of him, and his account of Estotiland and Drogeo rests simply on the tale of the fisherman, after whose descriptions his map must have been conjecturally projected. The whole story resembles much the fables circulated shortly after the discovery of Columbus, to arrogate to other nations and individuals the credit of the achievement.

M. Malte-Brun intimates, that the alleged discovery of Vinland may have been known to Columbus when he made a voyage in the North Sea in 1477\*, and that the map of Zeno being in the national library at London, in a Danish work, at the time when Bartholomew Columbus was in that city employed in making maps, he may have known something of it, and have communicated it to his brother†. Had M. Malte-Brun examined the

\* Malte-Brun, *Hist. de Géog.* t. i. l. 17.

† *Ib. Géog. Universelle*, t. xiv. note sur la découverte de l'Amérique.

history of Columbus with his usual accuracy, he would have perceived, that, in his correspondence with Paolo Toscanelli in 1474, he had expressed his intention of seeking India by a route directly to the west. His voyage to the north did not take place until three years afterwards. As to the residence of Bartholomew in London, it was not until after Columbus had made his propositions of discovery to Portugal, if not to the courts of other powers. Granting, therefore, that he had subsequently heard the dubious stories of Vinland and of the fisherman's adventures, as related by Zeno, or at least by Marcolini, they evidently could not have influenced him in his great enterprise. His route had no reference to them, but was a direct western course, not toward Vinland and Estotiland and Drogeo, but in search of Cipango, and Cathay, and the other countries described by Marco Polo as lying at the extremity of India.





CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF AFRICA BY THE  
ANCIENTS.

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THE knowledge of the ancients with respect to the Atlantic coast of Africa is considered by modern investigators much less extensive than had been imagined, and it is doubted whether they had any practical authority for the belief that Africa was circumnavigable. The alleged voyage of Eudoxus of Cyzicus from the Red Sea to Gibraltar, though recorded by Pliny, Pomponius Mela, and others, is given entirely on the dictum of Cornelius Nepos, who does not tell from whence he derived his information. Possidonius (cited by Strabo) gives an entirely different account of this voyage, and rejects it with contempt.

The famous voyage of Hanno the Carthaginian is supposed to have taken place about a thousand years before the Christian era. The *Periplus Hannonis* remains, a brief and obscure record of this expedition, and a subject of great comment

and controversy. By some it has been pronounced a fictitious work, fabricated among the Greeks, but its authenticity has been ably vindicated. It appears to be satisfactorily proved, however, that the voyage of this navigator has been greatly exaggerated, and that he never circumnavigated the extreme end of Africa. Mons. de Bougainville\* traces his route to a promontory, which he named the West Horn, and which was supposed to be Cape Palmas, about five or six degrees north of the equinoxial line ; from whence he proceeded to another promontory, under the same parallel, which he called the South Horn, supposed to be Cape de Tres Puntas. Mons. Gosselin, however, in his *Researches into the Geography of the Ancients* (t. i. p. 162, &c.), after a rigid examination of the *Periplus* of Hanno, determines that he had not sailed farther south than Cape Non. Pliny, who makes Hanno range the whole coast of Africa, from the Straits to the confines of Arabia, had never seen his *Periplus*, but took his idea from the works of Xenophon of Lampsaco. The Greeks surcharged the narration of the voyager with all

\* *Mémoires de l'Acad. des Inscript.* t. xxvi.

kinds of fables, and on their unfaithful copies Strabo founded many of his assertions. According to M. Gosselin, the itineraries of Hanno, of Scylax, Polybius, Statius, Sebosus, and Juba ; the recitals of Plato, of Aristotle, of Pliny, of Plutarch, and the tables of Ptolemy, all bring us to the same results, and, notwithstanding their apparent contradictions, fix the limits of southern navigation about the neighbourhood of Cape Non, or Cape Bojador.

The opinion that Africa was a peninsula, which existed among the Persians, the Egyptians, and, perhaps, the Greeks, several centuries prior to the Christian era, was not, in his opinion, founded upon any known facts, but merely on conjecture, from considering the immensity and unity of the ocean ; or, perhaps, on mere ancient traditions ; or on ideas produced by the Carthaginian discoveries beyond the straits of Gibraltar, and those of the Egyptians beyond the gulf of Arabia. He thinks that there was a very remote period when geography was much more perfect than in the time of the Phœnicians and the Greeks, whose

knowledge was but confused traces of what had previously been better known.

The opinion that the Indian sea joined the ocean was admitted among the Greeks, and in the school of Alexandria, until the time of Hipparchus. It seemed authorized by the direction which the coast of Africa took after Cape Aromata, always tending westward, as far as it had been explored by navigators. It was supposed that the western coast of Africa rounded off to meet the eastern, and that the whole was bounded by the ocean much to the northward of the equator. Such was the opinion of Crates, who lived in the time of Alexander ; of Aratus, of Cleanthes, of Cleomedes, of Strabo, of Pomponius Mela, of Macrobius, and many others.

Hipparchus proposed a different system, and led the world into an error which for a long time retarded the maritime communication of Europe and India. He supposed that the seas were separated into distinct basins ; and that the eastern shores of Africa made a circuit round the Indian sea, so as to join those of Asia beyond the mouth

of the Ganges. Subsequent discoveries, instead of refuting this error, only placed the junction of the continents at a greater distance. Marinius of Tyre and Ptolemy adopted this opinion in their works, and illustrated it in their maps, which for centuries controlled the general belief of mankind, and perpetuated the idea that Africa extended onward to the south pole, and that it was impossible to arrive by sea at the coasts of India. Still there were geographers who leaned to the more ancient idea of a communication between the Indian sea and the Atlantic ocean. It had its advocates in Spain, and was maintained by Pomponius Mela, and by Isidore of Seville. It was believed also by some of the learned in Italy in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, and thus was kept alive until it was acted upon so vigorously by prince Henry of Portugal, and at length triumphantly demonstrated by Vasco de Gama, in his circumnavigation of the Cape of Good Hope.





No. XV.

OF THE SHIPS OF COLUMBUS.

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IN remarking on the smallness of the vessels with which Columbus made his first voyage, Dr. Robertson observes, “ that in the fifteenth century the bulk and construction of vessels were accommodated to the short and easy voyages along the coast, which they were accustomed to perform.”

We have many proofs, however, that, even anterior to the fifteenth century, there were large ships employed by the Spaniards, as well as by other nations. In an edict published in Barcelona in 1354, by Pedro IV. enforcing various regulations for the security of commerce, mention is made of Catalonian merchant ships of two and three decks, and from 8,000 to 12,000 quintals burthen.

In 1419, Alonzo of Arragon hired several merchant ships to transport artillery, horses, &c. from Barcelona to Italy; among which were two, each of which carried one hundred and twenty horses,

which it is computed would require a vessel of at least 600 tons.

In 1463, mention is made of a Venetian ship which arrived at Barcelona from England laden with wheat, and being of 700 tons burthen.

In 1497, a Castilian vessel arrived there of 12,000 quintals burthen. These arrivals, incidentally mentioned among others of similar size, as happening at one port, show that large ships were in use in those days\*. Indeed, at the time of fitting out the second expedition of Columbus, there were prepared in the port of Borneo a caracca of 1250 tons, and four ships of from 150 to 450 tons burthen. Their destination, however, was altered, and they were sent to convey Muley Boabdil, the last Moorish king of Granada, from the coast of his conquered territory to Africa†.

It was not for want of large vessels in the Spanish ports, therefore, that those of Columbus were of so small a size. He considered them best adapted to voyages of discovery, as they required but little depth of water, and therefore could

\* Capomani, *Questiones Criticas*. Quest. 6.

† Archives de Ind. en Sevilla.

more easily and safely coast unknown shores, and explore bays and rivers. He had some purposely constructed of a very small size for this service; such was the caravel which, in his third voyage, he despatched to look out for an opening to the sea at the upper part of the gulf of Paria, when the water grew too shallow for his vessel of one hundred tons burthen.

The most singular circumstance with respect to the ships of Columbus is, that they should be open vessels; for it seems difficult to believe that a voyage of such extent and peril should be attempted in barks of so frail a construction. This, however, is expressly mentioned by Peter Martyr in his *decades*, written at the time; and mention is made occasionally in the memoirs relative to the voyages, written by Columbus and his son, of certain of his vessels being without decks. He sometimes speaks of the same vessel as a ship and a caravel. There has been some discussion of late as to the precise meaning of the term caravel. The chevalier Bossi, in his *Dissertations on Columbus*, observes that, in the Mediterranean, caravel

designates the largest class of ships of war among the Mussulmans; and that in Portugal it means a small vessel of from 120 to 140 tons burthen; but Columbus sometimes applies it to a vessel of forty tons.

Du Cange, in his Glossary, considers it a word of Italian origin. Bossi thinks it either Turkish or Arabic, and probably introduced into the European languages by the Moors. Mr. Edward Everett, in a note to his Plymouth Oration, considers that the true origin of the word is given in Ferrarii Origines Linguæ Italicæ: “Caravela, navigii minoris genus. Lat. Carabus; Græce Καραβος.”

That the word caravel was intended to signify a vessel of a small size, is evident from a naval classification made by king Alonzo in the middle of the thirteenth century. In the first class he enumerates *Naos*, or large ships, which go only with sails; some of which have two masts, and others but one. In the second class, smaller vessels, as Caraccas, Fustas, Ballenares, Pinazas, Carabelas, &c. In the third class, vessels with

sails and oars, as Galleys, Galeots, Tardantes, and Saetias\*.

Bossi gives a copy of a letter written by Columbus to Don Raphael Xansis, treasurer of the king of Spain; an edition of which exists in the public library at Milan. With this letter he gives several wood cuts of sketches made with a pen, which accompanied this letter, and which he supposes to have been from the hand of Columbus. In these are represented vessels which are probably caravels. They have high bows and sterns, with castles on the latter. They have short masts, with large square sails. One of them, besides sails, has benches of oars, and is probably intended to represent a galley. They are all evidently vessels of small size and light construction.

In a work called "*Recherches sur le Commerce*," published in Amsterdam, 1779, is a plate representing a vessel of the latter part of the 15th century. It is taken from a picture in the church of S. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice. The vessel bears much resemblance to those said to have been sketched by Columbus: it has two masts, one of

\* Capomani, *Quest. Crit.*

which is extremely small, with a latine sail. The main mast has a large square sail. The vessel has a high poop and prow, is decked at each end, and is open in the centre.

It appears to be the fact, therefore, that most of the vessels with which Columbus undertook his long and perilous voyages were of this light and frail construction ; and little superior to the small craft which ply on rivers and along coasts in modern days.

No. XVI.

ROUTE OF COLUMBUS IN HIS FIRST VOYAGE \*.

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It has hitherto been supposed that one of the Bahama Islands, at present bearing the name of San Salvador, and which is also known as Cat Island, was the first point where Columbus came in contact with the New World. Don Martin Navarrete, however, director of the hydrographical dépôt at Madrid, &c. &c. in his introduction to the "Collection of Spanish Voyages and Discoveries" recently published at Madrid, has endeavoured to show that it must have been Turk's Island, one of the same group, situated about 100 leagues (of 20 to the degree) S. E. of San Salvador. Great care has been taken to examine candidly the opinion of Navarrete, comparing it with the journal of

\* The author of this work is indebted for this able examination of the route of Columbus to an officer of the navy of the United States, whose name he regrets the not being at liberty to mention. He has been greatly benefited, in various parts of this history, by nautical information from the same intelligent source.



Columbus, as published in the above-mentioned work, and with the personal observations of the writer of this article, who has been much among these islands.

Columbus describes Guanahani, on which he landed, and to which he gave the name of San Salvador, as being a beautiful island, and very large ; as being level, and covered with forests, many of the trees of which bore fruit ; as having abundance of fresh water, and a large lake in the centre ; that it was inhabited by a numerous population ; that he proceeded for a considerable distance in his boats along the shore, which tended to the N.N.E., and as he passed, was visited by the inhabitants of several villages. Turk's Island does not answer to this description.

Turk's Island is a low key composed of sand and rocks, and lying north and south, less than two leagues in extent. It is utterly destitute of wood, and has not a single tree of native growth. It has no fresh water, the inhabitants depending entirely on cisterns and casks in which they preserve the rain ; neither has it any lake, but several salt ponds, which furnish the sole production of

the island. Turk's Island cannot be approached on the east or north-east side, in consequence of the reef that surrounds it. It has no harbour, but has an open road on the west side, which vessels at anchor there have to leave and put to sea whenever the wind comes from any other quarter than that of the usual trade breeze of N.E. which blows over the island; for the shore is so bold that there is no anchorage except close to it; and when the wind ceases to blow from the land, vessels remaining at their anchors would be swung against the rocks, or forced high upon the shore, by the terrible surf that then prevails. The unfrequented road of the Hawk's Nest, at the south end of the island, is even more dangerous. This island, which is not susceptible of the slightest cultivation, furnishes a scanty subsistence to a few sheep and horses. The inhabitants draw all their consumption from abroad, with the exception of fish and turtle, which are taken in abundance, and supply the principal food of the slaves employed in the salt-works. The whole wealth of the island consists in the produce of the salt-ponds, and in the salvage and plunder of the many wrecks which

take place in the neighbourhood. Turk's Island, therefore, would never be inhabited in a savage state of society, where commerce does not exist, and where men are obliged to draw their subsistence from the spot which they people.

Again: when about to leave Guanahani, Columbus was at a loss to choose which to visit of a great number of islands in sight. Now there is no land visible from Turk's Island, excepting the two salt keys which lie south of it, and with it form the group known as Turk's Islands. The journal of Columbus does not tell us what course he steered in going from Guanahani to Concepcion, but he states, that it was five leagues distant from the former, and that the current was against him in sailing to it: whereas, the distance from Turk's Island to the Gran Caico, supposed by Navarrete to be the Concepcion of Columbus, is nearly double, and the current sets constantly to the W.N.W. among these islands, which would be favourable in going from Turk's Island to the Caicos.

From Concepcion Columbus went next to an island which he saw nine leagues off in a westerly

direction, to which he gave the name of Fernandina. This Navarrete takes to be Little Inagua, distant no less than twenty-two leagues from Gran Caico. Besides, in going to Little Inagua, it would be necessary to pass quite close to three islands, each larger than Turk's Island, none of which are mentioned in the journal. Columbus describes Fernandina as stretching twenty-eight leagues S.E. and N.W.: whereas Little Inagua has its greatest length of four leagues in a S.W. direction. In a word, the description of Fernandina has nothing in common with Little Inagua. From Fernandina Columbus sailed S.E. to Isabella, which Navarrete takes to be Great Inagua: whereas this latter bears S.W. from Little Inagua, a course differing  $90^{\circ}$  from the one followed by Columbus.

Again: Columbus, on the 20th of November, takes occasion to say that Guanahani was distant eight leagues from Isabella: whereas Turk's Island is thirty-five leagues from Great Inagua. Leaving Isabella, Columbus stood W.S.W. for the island of Cuba, and fell in with the *Islas Aunas*. This course drawn from Great Inagua,

would meet the coast of Cuba about Port Nipe : whereas Navarrete supposes that Columbus next fell in with the keys south of the Jumentos, and which bear W.N.W. from Inagua ; a course differing  $45^{\circ}$  from the one steered by the ships. After sailing for some time in the neighbourhood of Cuba, Columbus finds himself, on the 14th of November, in the sea of Nuestra Señora, surrounded by so many islands that it was impossible to count them : whereas, on the same day, Navarrete places him off Cape Moa, where there is but one small island, and more than fifty leagues distant from any group that can possibly answer the description.

Columbus informs us that San Salvador was distant from Port Principe forty-five leagues : whereas Turk's Island is distant from the point, supposed by Navarrete to be the same, eighty leagues.

On taking leave of Cuba, Columbus remarks that he had followed its coast for an extent of 120 leagues. Deducting twenty leagues for his having followed its windings, there still remain 100. Now, Navarrete only supposes him to

have coasted this island an extent of seventy leagues.

Such are the most important difficulties which the theory of Navarrete offers, and which appear insurmountable. Let us now take up the route of Columbus as recorded in his journal, and, with the best charts before us, examine how it agrees with the popular and traditional opinion, that he first landed on the island of San Salvador.

We learn from the journal of Columbus that, on the 11th of October, 1492, he continued steering W.S.W. until sunset, when he returned to his old course of west, the vessels running at the rate of three leagues an hour. At ten o'clock he and several of his crew saw a light, which seemed like a torch carried about on land. He continued running on four hours longer, and had made a distance of twelve leagues farther west, when at two in the morning land was discovered a-head, distant two leagues. The twelve leagues which they ran since ten o'clock, with the two leagues distance from the land, form a total, corresponding essentially with the distance and situation of Watling's Island from San Salvador; and it is thence pre-



sumed, that the light seen at that hour was on Watling's Island, which they were then passing. Had the light been seen on land a-head, and they had kept running on four hours, at the rate of three leagues an hour, they must have run high and dry on shore. As the admiral himself received the royal reward for having seen this light, as the first discovery of land, Watling's Island is believed to be the point for which this premium was granted.

On making land, the vessels were hove to until daylight of the same 12th of October; they then anchored off an island of great beauty, covered with forests, and extremely populous.

It was called Guanahani by the natives, but Columbus gave it the name of San Salvador. Exploring its coast, where it ran to the N.N.E. he found a harbour capable of sheltering any number of ships. This description corresponds minutely with the S.E. part of the island known as San Salvador, or Cat Island, which lies east and west, bending at its eastern extremity to the N.N.E., and has the same verdant and fertile appearance. The vessels had probably drifted into



this bay at the S.E. side of San Salvador, on the morning of the 12th, while lying to for daylight ; nor did Columbus, while remaining at the island, or when sailing from it, open the land so as to discover that what he had taken for its whole length was but a bend at one end of it, and that the main body of the island lay behind, stretching far to the N.W. From Guanahani, Columbus saw so many other islands that he was at a loss which next to visit. The Indians signified that they were innumerable, and mentioned the names of above a hundred. He determined to go to the largest in sight, which appeared to be about five leagues distant ; some of the others were nearer, and some further off. The island thus selected, it is presumed, was the present island of Concepcion ; and that the others were that singular belt of small islands, known as La Cadena (or the chain), stretching past the island of San Salvador in a S.E. by N.W. direction : the nearest of the group being nearer than Concepcion, while the rest are more distant.

Leaving San Salvador in the afternoon of the 14th for the island thus selected, the ships lay by

during the night, and did not reach it until late in the following day, being retarded by adverse currents. Columbus gave this island the name of Santa Maria de la Concepcion : he does not mention either its bearings from San Salvador, or the course which he steered in going to it. We know that in all this neighbourhood the current sets strongly and constantly to the W.N.W. ; and since Columbus had the current against him, he must have been sailing in an opposite direction, or to the E.S.E. Besides, when near Concepcion, Columbus sees another island to the westward, the largest he had yet seen ; but he tells us that he anchored off Concepcion, and did not stand for this larger island, because he could not have sailed to the west. Hence it is rendered certain that Columbus did not sail westward in going from San Salvador to Concepcion ; for, from the opposition of the wind, as there could be no other cause, he could not sail towards that quarter. Now, on reference to the chart, we find the island at present known as Concepcion situated E.S.E. from San Salvador, and at a corresponding distance of five leagues.

Leaving Concepcion on the 16th October, Columbus steered for a very large island seen to the westward nine leagues off, and which extended itself twenty-eight leagues in a S.E. and N.W. direction. He was becalmed the whole day, and did not reach the island until the following morning, 17th October. He named it Fernandina. At noon he made sail again, with a view to run round it, and reach another island called Samoet; but the wind being at S.E. by S., the course he wished to steer, the natives signified that it would be easier to sail round this island by running to the N.W. with a fair wind. He therefore bore up to the N.W., and having run two leagues found a marvellous port, with a narrow entrance, or rather with two entrances, for there was an island which shut it in completely, forming a noble basin within. Sailing out of this harbour by the opposite entrance at the N.W., he discovered that part of the island which runs east and west. The natives signified to him that this island was smaller than Samoet, and that it would be better to return towards the latter. It had now become calm, but shortly after there sprung up a

breeze from W.N.W., which was a-head for the course they had been steering ; so they bore up and stood to the E.S.E. in order to get an offing ; for the weather threatened a storm, which however dissipated itself in rain. The next day, being the 18th October, they anchored opposite the extremity of Fernandina.

The whole of this description answers most accurately to the island of Exuma, which lies south from San Salvador, and S.W. by S. from Concepcion. The only inconsistency is, that Columbus states that Fernandina bore nearly west from Concepcion, and was twenty-eight leagues in extent. This mistake must have proceeded from his having taken the long chain of keys called La Cadena for part of the same Exuma ; which continuous appearance they naturally assume when seen from Concepcion, for they run in the same S.E. and N.W. direction. Their bearings, when seen from the same point, is likewise westerly as well as south-westerly. As a proof that such was the case, it may be observed, that, after having approached these islands, instead of the extent of Fernandina being increased to his eye, he now

remarks that it was twenty leagues long, whereas before it was estimated by him at twenty-eight ; he now discovers that instead of one island there were many, and alters his course southerly to reach the one that was most conspicuous.

The identity of the island here described with Exuma is irresistibly forced upon the mind. The distance from Concepcion, the remarkable port with an island in front of it, and farther on its coast turning off to the westward, are all so accurately delineated, that it would seem as though the chart had been drawn from the description of Columbus.

On the 19th October, the ships left Fernandina, steering S.E. with the wind at north. Sailing three hours on this course, they discovered Samoet to the east, and steered for it, arriving at its north point before noon. Here they found a little island surrounded by rocks, with another reef of rocks lying between it and Samoet. To Samoet Columbus gave the name of Isabella, and to the point of it opposite the little island, that of Cabo del Isleo ; the cape at the S.W. point of Samoet Columbus called Cabo de Laguna, and

off this last his ships were brought to anchor. The little island lay in the direction from Fernandina to Isabella, east and west. The coast from the small island lay westerly twelve leagues to a cape, which Columbus called *Fermosa* from its beauty; this he believed to be an island apart from *Samoet* or *Isabella*, with another one between them. Leaving *Cabo Laguna*, where he remained until the 20th October, Columbus steered to the N.E. towards *Cabo del Isleo*, but meeting with shoals inside the small island, he did not come to anchor until the day following. Near this extremity of *Isabella* they found a lake, from which the ships were supplied with water.

This island of *Isabella*, or *Samoet*, agrees so accurately in its description with *Isla Larga*, which lies east of *Exuma*, that it is only necessary to read it with the chart unfolded to become convinced of the identity.

Having resolved to visit the island which the natives called *Cuba*, and described as bearing W.S.W. from *Isabella*, Columbus left *Cabo del Isleo* at midnight, the commencement of the 24th October, and shaped his course accordingly to



the W.S.W. The wind continued light, with rain, until noon, when it freshened up, and in the evening Cape Ferde, the S.W. point of Fernandina, bore N.W. distant seven leagues. As the night became tempestuous, he lay to until morning, drifting according to the reckoning only two leagues.

On the morning of the 25th he made sail again to W.S.W., until nine o'clock, when he had run five leagues; he then steered west until three, when he had run eleven leagues, at which hour land was discovered, consisting of seven or eight keys lying north and south, and distant five leagues from the ships. Here he anchored the next day, south of these islands, which he called *Islas de Arena*; they were low, and five or six leagues in extent.

The distances run by Columbus, added to the departure taken from Fernandina and the distance from these islands of *Arena* at the time of discovering, give a sum of thirty leagues. This sum of thirty leagues is about three less than the distance from the S.W. point of Fernandina or *Exuma*, whence Columbus took his departure, to



the group of Mucaras, which lie east of Cayo Lobo on the grand bank of Bahama, and which correspond to the description of Columbus. If it were necessary to account for the difference of three leagues in a reckoning, where so much is given on conjecture, it would readily occur to a seaman, that an allowance of two leagues for drift, during a long night of blowy weather, is but a small one. The course from Exuma to the Mucaras is about S.W. by W. The course followed by Columbus differs a little from this, but as it was his intention, on setting sail from Isabella, to steer W.S.W., and since he afterwards altered it to west, we may conclude that he did so in consequence of having been run out of his course to the southward, while lying to the night previous.

Oct. 27.—At sunrise Columbus set sail from the isles Arenas or Mucaras, for an island called Cuba, steering S.S.W. At dark, having made seventeen leagues on that course, he saw the land, and hove his ships to until morning.

In this part of the journal, Columbus does not describe the localities with that accuracy with

which he had hitherto noted every thing ; the text also is in several places obscure.

The ships having remained hove to until morning, they made sail on the 28th, at S.S.W. entering a beautiful river with a fine harbour, which they named San Salvador. This part of San Salvador we take to be the one now known as Caravelas Grandes, situated eight leagues west of Nuevitao del Principe. Its bearings and distance from the Mucaras coincide exactly with those run by Columbus ; and its description coincides, as far as can be ascertained by charts, with the port which he visited.

Oct. 29.—Leaving this port, Columbus stood to the west, and having sailed six leagues, he came to a point of the island running N.W., which we take to be the Punta Gorda ; and, ten leagues farther, another stretching easterly, which will be Punta Curiana. One league farther he discovered a small river, and beyond this another very large one, to which he gave the name of Rio de Maus. This river emptied into a fine basin in the form of a lake, having a bold entrance : it had for landmarks two round mountains at the S.W., and to

the W.N.W. a bold promontory, suitable for a fortification, which projected far into the sea. This we take to be the fine harbour and river situated west of Point Curiana; its distance corresponds with that run by Columbus from Caravelas Grandes, which we have supposed identical with the port of San Salvador. Leaving Rio de Maus the 30th of October, Columbus stood to the N.W. for fifteen leagues, when he saw a cape, to which he gave the name of Cabo de Palmas. This, we believe, is the one which forms the eastern entrance to Laguna de Moron. Beyond this cape was a river, distant, according to the natives, four days' journey from the town of Cuba; Columbus determined therefore to make for it.

Having lain to all night, he reached the river on the 31st of October, but found that it was too shallow to admit his ships. This is supposed to be what is now known as Laguna de Moron. Beyond this was a cape surrounded by shoals, and another projected still farther out. Between these two capes was a bay capable of receiving small vessels. The identity here of the description with the coast near Laguna de Moron seems very

clear. The cape east of Laguna de Moron coincides with Cape Palmas, the Laguna de Moron with the shoal river described by Columbus; and in the western point of entrance, with the island of Cabrion opposite it, we recognise the two projecting capes he speaks of, with what appeared to be a bay between them. This all is a remarkable combination, difficult to be found any where but in the same spot which Columbus visited and described. Further, the coast from the port of San Salvador had run west to Rio de Maus, a distance of seventeen leagues, and from Rio de Maus it had extended N.W. fifteen leagues to Cabo de Palmas; all of which agrees fully with what has been here supposed. The wind having shifted to north, which was contrary to the course they had been steering, the vessels bore up and returned to Rio de Maus.

On the 12th of November the ships sailed out of Rio de Maus to go in quest of Babeque, an island believed to abound in gold, and to lie E. by S. from that port. Having sailed eight leagues with a fair wind, they came to a river, in which may be recognised the one which lies just west of

Punta Gorda. Four leagues farther they saw another, which they called Rio del Sol. It appeared very large, but they did not stop to examine it, as the wind was fair to advance. This we take to be the river now known as Sabana. Columbus was now retracing his steps, and had made twelve leagues from Rio de Maus ; but in going west from port San Salvador to Rio de Maus, he had run seventeen leagues. San Salvador therefore remains five leagues east of Rio del Sol ; and, accordingly, on reference to the chart, we find Caravelas Grandes situated a corresponding distance from Sabana.

Having run six leagues from Rio del Sol, which makes in all eighteen leagues from Rio de Maus, Columbus came to a cape which he called Cabo de Cuba, probably from supposing it to be the extremity of that island. This corresponds precisely in distance from Punta Casiana with the lesser island of Guajava, situated near Cuba, and between which and the greater Guajava Columbus must have passed in running in for Port San Salvador. Either he did not notice it, from his attention being engrossed by the magnificent island before

him, or, as is also possible, his vessels may have been drifted through the passage, which is two leagues wide, while lying to the night previous to their arrival at Port San Salvador.

On the 13th of November, having hove to all night, in the morning the ships passed a point two leagues in extent, and then entered into a gulf that made into the S.S.W., and which Columbus thought separated Cuba from Bohio. At the bottom of the gulf was a large basin between two mountains. He could not determine whether or not this was an arm of the sea; for not finding shelter from the north wind, he put to sea again. Hence it would appear that Columbus must have partly sailed round the smaller Guajava, which he took to be the extremity of Cuba, without being aware that a few hours' sail would have taken him, by this channel, to Port San Salvador, his first discovery in Cuba, and so back to the same Rio del Sol which he had passed the day previous. Of the two mountains seen on both sides of this entrance, the principal one corresponds with the peak called Alto de Juan Daune, which lies seven leagues west of Punta de Maternillos. The wind



continuing north, he stood east fourteen leagues from Cape Cuba, which we have supposed the lesser island of Guajava. It is here rendered sure that the point of Little Guajava was believed by him to be the extremity of Cuba; for he speaks of the land mentioned as lying to leeward of the above-mentioned gulf as being the island of Bohio, and says that he discovered twenty leagues of it running E.S.E. and W.N.W.

On the 14th November, having lain to all night with a N.E. wind, he determined to seek a port, and if he found none, to return to those which he had left in the island of Cuba; for it will be remembered that all east of Guajava he supposed to be Bohio. He steered E. by S. therefore six leagues, and then stood in for the land. Here he saw many ports and islands; but as it blew fresh, with a heavy sea, he dared not enter, but ran the coast down N.W. by W. for a distance of eighteen leagues, where he saw a clear entrance and a port, into which he stood S.S.W. and afterwards S.E., the navigation being all clear and open. Here Columbus beheld so many islands that it was impossible to count them. They were very lofty,



and covered with trees. Columbus called the neighbouring sea Mar de Nuestra Señora, and to the harbour near the entrance to these islands he gave the name of Port Principe. This harbour he says he did not enter until the Sunday following, which was four days after. This part of the text of Columbus's journal is confused, and there are also anticipations, as if it had been written subsequently, or mixed together in copying. It appears evident, that while lying to the night previous, with the wind at N.E., the ships had drifted to the N.W., and been carried by the powerful current of the Bahama channel far in the same direction. When they bore up, therefore, to return to the ports which they had left in the island of Cuba, they fell in to leeward of them, and now first discovered the numerous group of islands of which Cayo Romano is the principal. The current of this channel is of itself sufficient to have carried the vessels to the westward a distance of 20 leagues, which is what they had run easterly since leaving Cape Cuba, or Guajava, for it had acted upon them during a period of thirty hours. There can be no doubt as to the identity

of these keys with those about Cayo Romano ; for they are the only ones in the neighbourhood of Cuba that are not of a low and swampy nature, but large and lofty. They enclose a free, open navigation, and abundance of fine harbours, in late years the resort of pirates, who found security and concealment for themselves and their prizes in the recesses of these lofty keys. From the description of Columbus, the vessels must have entered between the islands of Baril and Pacedon, and sailing along Cayo Romano on a S.E. course, have reached in another day their old cruising ground in the neighbourhood of lesser Guajava. Not only Columbus does not tell us here of his having changed his anchorage amongst these keys, but his journal does not even mention his having anchored at all, until the return from the ineffectual search after Babeque. It is clear, from what has been said, that it was not in Port Principe that the vessels anchored on this occasion ; but it could not have been very distant, since Columbus went from the ships in his boats on the 18th November, to place a cross at its entrance. He had probably seen the entrance from without, when

sailing east from Guajava on the 13th of November. The identity of this port with the one now known as Neuvitas el Principe seems certain, from the description of its entrance. Columbus, it appears, did not visit its interior.

On the 19th November the ships sailed again, in quest of Babeque. At sunset Port Principe bore S.S.W. distant seven leagues, and having sailed all night at N.E. by N. and until ten o'clock of the next day (20th November), they had run a distance of fifteen leagues on that course. The wind blowing from E.S.E., which was the direction in which Babeque was supposed to lie, and the weather being foul, Columbus determined to return to Port Principe, which was then distant twenty-five leagues. He did not wish to go to Isabella, distant only twelve leagues, lest the Indians whom he had brought from San Salvador, which lay eight leagues from Isabella, should make their escape. Thus, in sailing N.E. by N. from near Port Principe, Columbus had approached within a short distance of Isabella. That island was then, according to his calculations, thirty-seven leagues from Port Principe; and San Salvador was forty-five leagues from the same point.

The first differs but eight leagues from the truth, the latter nine; or from the actual distance of Nuevitas el Principe from Isla Larga and San Salvador. Again, let us now call to mind the course made by Columbus in going from Isabella to Cuba; it was first W.S.W., then west, and afterwards S.S.W. Having consideration for the different distances run on each, these yield a medium course not materially differing from S.W. Sailing then S.W. from Isabella, Columbus had reached Port San Salvador, on the coast of Cuba. Making afterwards a course of N.E. by N. from off Port Principe, he was going in the direction of Isabella. Hence we deduce that Port San Salvador, on the coast of Cuba, lay west of Port Principe, and the whole combination is thus bound together and established. The two islands seen by Columbus at ten o'clock of the same 20th November, must have been some of the keys which lie west of the Jumentos. Running back towards Port Principe, Columbus made it at dark, but found that he had been carried to the westward by the currents. This furnishes a sufficient proof of the strength of the current in the Bahama channel; for it will be remembered that

he ran over to Cuba with a fair wind. After contending for four days, until the 24th November, with light winds against the force of these currents, he arrived at length opposite the level island whence he had set out the week before when going to Babeque.

We are thus accidentally informed that the point from which Columbus started in search of Babeque was the same island of Guajava the lesser, which lies west of Neuvas el Principe. Further : at first he dared not enter into the opening between the two mountains, for it seemed as though the sea broke upon them ; but having sent the boat a-head, the vessels followed in at S.W. and then W. into a fine harbour. The level island lay north of it, and with another island formed a secure basin capable of sheltering all the navy of Spain. This level island resolves itself then into our late Cape Cuba, which we have supposed to be Little Guajava, and the entrance east of it becomes identical with the gulf above mentioned which lay between two mountains, one of which we have supposed the Alto de Juan Daune, and which gulf appeared to divide Cuba from Bohio.

Our course now becomes a plain one. On the 26th of November, Columbus sailed from Santa Catalina (the name given by him to the port last described) at sunrise, and stood for the cape at the S.E. which he called Cabo de Pico. In this it is easy to recognise the high peak already spoken of as the Alto de Juan Daune. Arrived off this he saw another cape, distant fifteen leagues, and still farther another five leagues beyond it, which he called Cabo de Campana. The first must be that now known as Point Padre, the second Point Mulas : their distances from Alto de Juan Daune are underrated ; but it requires no little experience to estimate correctly the distances of the bold headlands of Cuba, as seen through the pure atmosphere that surrounds the island.

Having passed Point Mulas in the night, on the 27th, Columbus looked into the deep bay that lies S.E. of it, and seeing the bold projecting head-land that makes out between Port Nipe and Port Banes, with those deep bays on each side of it, he supposed it to be an arm of the sea dividing one land from another with an island between them.



Having landed at Taco for a short time, Columbus arrived in the evening of the 27th at Baracoa, to which he gave the name of Puerto Santo. From Cabo del Pico to Puerto Santo, a distance of sixty leagues, he had passed no fewer than nine good ports and five rivers to Cape Campana, and thence to Puerto Santo eight more rivers each with a good port ; all of which may be found on the chart between Alto de Juan Daune and Baracoa. By keeping near the coast he had been assisted to the S.E. by the eddy current of the Bahama channel. Sailing from Puerto Santo or Baracoa on the 4th of December, he reached the extremity of Cuba the following day, and striking off upon a wind to the S.E. in search of Babeque, which lay to the N.E., he came in sight of Bohio, to which he gave the name of Espaniola.

On taking leave of Cuba, Columbus tells us that he had coasted it a distance of 120 leagues. Allowing twenty leagues of this distance for his having followed the undulations of the coast, the remaining 100 measured from Point Maysi fall exactly upon Cabrion Key, which we have supposed the western boundary of his discoveries.



The astronomical observations of Columbus form no objection to what has been here advanced; for he tells us that the instrument which he made use of to measure the meridian altitudes of the heavenly bodies was out of order and not to be depended upon. He places his first discovery, Guanahani, in the latitude of Ferro, which is about  $27^{\circ} 30'$  north. San Salvador we find in  $24^{\circ} 30'$ , and Turk's Island in  $21^{\circ} 30'$ : both are very wide of the truth, but it is certainly easier to conceive an error of three than one of six degrees.

Laying aside geographical demonstration, let us now examine how historical records agree with the opinion here supported, that the island of San Salvador was the first point where Columbus came in contact with the New World. Herrera, who is considered the most faithful and authentic of Spanish historians, wrote his History of the Indies towards the year 1600. In describing the voyage of Juan Ponce de Leon, made to Florida in 1512, he makes the following remarks\*: "Leaving Aguada in Porto Rico, they steered to the N.W. by N., and in five days arrived at an island called

\* Herrera's Hist. Ind. Decad. i. lib. 9. cap. 10.

El Viejo, in latitude  $22^{\circ} 30'$  north. The next day they arrived at a small island of the Lucayos, called Caycos. On the eighth day they anchored at another island called Yaguna in  $24^{\circ}$ , on the eighth day out from Porto Rico. Thence they passed to the island of Manuega, in  $24^{\circ} 30'$ , and on the eleventh day they reached Guanahani, which is in  $25^{\circ} 40'$  north. This island of Guanahani was the first discovered by Columbus on his first voyage, and which he called San Salvador." This is the substance of the remarks of Herrera, and is entirely conclusive as to the location of San Salvador. The latitudes, it is true, are all placed higher than we now know them to be; that of San Salvador being such as to correspond with no other land than that now known as the Berry Islands, which are seventy leagues distant from the nearest coast of Cuba : whereas Columbus tells us that San Salvador was only forty-five leagues from Port Principe. But in those infant days of navigation, the instruments for measuring the altitudes of the heavenly bodies, and the tables of declinations for deducing the latitude, must have been so imperfect as to place the most scientific

navigator of the time below the most mechanical one of the present.

The second island arrived at by Ponce de Leon, in his north-western course, was one of the Caycos; the first one, then, called El Viejo, must have been Turk's Island, which lies S.E. of the Caycos. The third island they came to was probably Mariguana; the fourth, Crooked Island; and the fifth, Isla Larga. Lastly they came to Guanahani, the San Salvador of Columbus. If this be supposed identical with Turk's Island, where do we find the succession of islands touched at by Ponce de Leon on his way from Porto Rico to San Salvador\*? No stress has been laid, in these remarks, on the identity of name which has been preserved to San Salvador, Concepcion, and Port Principe, with those given by Columbus, though traditional usage is of vast weight in such matters. Geographical proof, of a conclusive kind it is thought, has been advanced, to enable the world to remain in its old hereditary belief that the

\* In the first chapter of Herrera's description of the Indies, appended to his history, is another scale of the Bahama islands, which corroborates the above. It begins at the opposite end, at the N.W., and runs down to the S.E. It is thought unnecessary to cite it particularly.

present island of San Salvador is the spot where Columbus first set foot upon the New World. Established opinions of the kind should not be lightly molested. It is a good old rule, that ought to be kept in mind in curious research as well as territorial dealings, “ Do not disturb the ancient landmarks.”



No. XVII.

PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH THE SUMS MENTIONED  
IN THIS WORK HAVE BEEN REDUCED INTO  
MODERN CURRENCY.

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IN the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the mark of silver, which was equal to eight ounces, or to fifty castillanas, was divided into sixty-five reals, and each real into thirty-four maravedis; so that there were 2,210 maravedis in the mark of silver. Among other silver coins, there was the real of eight, which, consisting of eight reals, was, within a small fraction, the eighth part of a mark of silver, or one ounce. Of the gold coins then in circulation, the castillano, or *dobla de la Vanda*, was worth 490 maravedis, and the ducado 393 maravedis.

If the value of the maravedi had remained unchanged in Spain down to the present day, it would be easy to reduce a sum of the time of

Ferdinand and Isabella into a correspondent sum of current money ; but by the successive depreciations of the coin of Vellon, or mixed metals, issued since that period, the *real* and maravedi of Vellon, which have replaced the ancient currency, were reduced, towards the year 1700, to about a third of the value of the old *real* and maravedi, now known as the *real* and maravedi of silver. As, however, the ancient piece of eight reals was equal approximately to the ounce of silver, and the duro, or dollar of the present day, is likewise equal to an ounce, they may be considered identical. Indeed, in Spanish America, the dollar, instead of being divided into twenty reals, as in Spain, is divided into only eight parts, called reals, which evidently represent the real of the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, as the dollar does the real of eight. But the ounce of silver was anciently worth  $276\frac{1}{4}$  maravedis ; the dollar, therefore, is likewise equal to  $276\frac{1}{4}$  maravedis. By converting, then, the sums mentioned in this work into maravedis, they have been afterwards reduced into dollars by dividing by  $276\frac{1}{4}$ .



There is still, however, another calculation to be made, before we can arrive at the actual value of any sum of gold and silver mentioned in former times. It is necessary to notice the variation which has taken place in the value of the metals themselves. In Europe, previous to the discovery of the New World, an ounce of gold commanded an amount of food or labour which would cost three ounces at the present day ; hence an ounce of gold was then estimated at three times its present value. At the same time an ounce of silver commanded an amount which at present costs four ounces of silver. It appears from this, that the value of gold and silver varied with respect to each other, as well as with respect to all other commodities. This is owing to there having been much more silver brought from the New World, with respect to the quantity previously in circulation, than there has been of gold. In the fifteenth century, one ounce of gold was equal to about twelve of silver ; and now, in the year 1827, it is exchanged against sixteen.

Hence, in giving an idea of the relative value

of the sums mentioned in this work, it has been found necessary to multiply them by 3, when in gold, and by 4, when expressed in silver \*.

It is expedient to add, that the dollar is reckoned in this work at 100 cents of the United States of North America, and four shillings and sixpence of England.

\* See Caballero, Pesos y Medidas. J. B. Say, Economie Politique.

No. XVIII.

MARCO POLO.

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THE travels of Marco Polo, or Paolo, furnish a key to many parts of the voyages and speculations of Columbus, which, without it, would hardly be comprehensible.

Marco Polo was a native of Venice, who, in the thirteenth century, made a journey into the remote, and, at that time, unknown regions of the East, and filled all Christendom with curiosity by his account of the countries he had visited. He was preceded in his travels by his father, Nicholas, and his uncle, Matteo Polo. These two brothers were of an illustrious family in Venice, and embarked, in the year 1250 \*, on a commercial voyage to the East. Having sailed up the Mediterranean and through the Bosphorus, they stopped for a

\* Ramusio, tom. ii. p. 17, ed. Venet. 1606.

short time at Constantinople. From hence they proceeded by the Euxine to Armenia, where they remained for a year, entertained with great favour at the court of a Tartar prince. A war breaking out between their patron and a neighbouring potentate, and the former being defeated, they were embarrassed how to extricate themselves from the country, and return home in safety. After various wanderings, they at length reached Bochara, in the gulf of Persia, where they resided for three years. While here, there arrived an ambassador from one of the inferior Tartar powers on his way to the court of the great khan. Finding that the two brothers were well acquainted with the Tartar tongue, he prevailed upon them to accompany him. After a march of several months, being delayed by snows and inundations, they arrived at the court of Cublai, otherwise called the great khan, which signifies king of kings, being the sovereign potentate of the Tartars. This magnificent prince received them with great distinction ; he made inquiries about the countries and princes of the West, their civil and military government, and the manners and customs of the Latin nations. Above all

he was curious on the subject of the Christian religion. He was so much struck by their replies, that, after holding a council with the chief persons of his kingdom, he entreated the two brothers to go on his part as ambassadors to the pope, to entreat him to send a hundred learned men, well instructed in the Christian faith, to impart a knowledge of it to the sages of his empire. He also entreated them to bring him a little oil from the lamp of our Saviour in Jerusalem, which he concluded must have marvellous virtues. Having given them letters to the pope, written in the Tartar language, he appointed one of the principal noblemen of his court to accompany them in their mission. On their taking leave, he furnished them with a tablet of gold, on which was engraved the royal arms; this was to serve as a passport, at sight of which the governors of the various provinces were to entertain them, to furnish them with escorts through dangerous places, and render them all other necessary services at the expense of the great khan.

They had scarce proceeded twenty miles when the nobleman who accompanied them fell ill, and

they were obliged to leave him and continue on their route. Their golden passport procured them every attention and facility throughout the dominions of the great khan. They arrived safely at Acre, in April, 1269. Here they received news of the recent death of pope Clement IV., at which they were much grieved, fearing it would cause delay in their mission. There was at that time in Acre a legate of the holy chair, Tebaldo de Visconti of Placentia, to whom they gave an account of their embassy. He heard them with great attention and interest, and advised them to await the election of a new pope, which must soon take place, before they proceeded to Rome on their mission.

They accordingly departed for Negropont, and from thence to Venice, where great changes had taken place in their domestic concerns during their long absence. The wife of Nicholas, whom he had left pregnant, had died in giving birth to his son Marco, who was now nineteen years of age.

As the contested election for the new pontiff remained pending for two years, they began to be

uneasy, lest the emperor of Tartary should grow impatient at so long a postponement of the conversion of himself and his people ; they determined, therefore, not to wait the election of a pope, but to proceed to Acre, and get such despatches and such ghostly ministry for the grand khan as the legate could furnish. On this second journey, Nicholas Polo took with him his son Marco, who afterwards wrote an account of these travels.

They were again received with great favour by the legate Tebaldo, who, anxious for the success of their mission, furnished them with letters to the grand khan, in which the doctrines of the Christian faith were fully expounded. With these, and with a supply of the holy oil from the sepulchre, they once more set out, in September, 1271, for the remote parts of Tartary. They had not long departed, however, when missions arrived from Rome, informing the legate of his own election to the holy chair. He took the name of Gregory X., and decreed that, in future, on the death of a pope, the cardinals should be shut up in conclave until they elected a successor ; a wise



regulation, which has since continued, enforcing a prompt decision, and preventing intrigue.

Immediately on receiving intelligence of his election, he despatched a courier to the king of Armenia, requesting that the two Venetians might be sent back to him if they had not departed. They joyfully returned, and were furnished with new letters to the khan. Two eloquent friars also, Nicholas Vincenti and Gilbert de Tripoli, were sent with them, with powers to ordain priests and bishops, and to grant absolution. They had presents of crystal vases and other costly articles, to deliver to the grand khan; and thus well provided, they once more set forth on their journey\*.

Arriving in Armenia, they ran great risks of their lives from the war which was raging, the soldan of Babylon having invaded the country. They took refuge for some time with the superior of a monastery: here the two reverend fathers, losing all courage to prosecute so perilous an enterprise, determined to remain, and the Venetians continued their journey. They were a long time on the way, and exposed to great hardships and suf-

\* Ramusio, t. iii.

ferings from floods and snow storms, it being the winter season. At length they reached a town in the dominions of the khan. When that potentate heard of their approach, he sent officers to meet them at forty days' distance from the court, and to provide quarters for them during their journey\*. He received them with great kindness ; was highly gratified with the result of their mission, and with the letters of the pope ; and having received from them some oil from the lamp of the holy sepulchre, he had it locked up and guarded as a precious treasure.

The three Venetians, father, brother, and son, were treated with such distinction by the khan, that the courtiers were filled with jealousy. Marco soon, however, made himself popular, and was particularly esteemed by the emperor. He acquired the various languages of the country, and was of such remarkable capacity, that, notwithstanding his youth, the khan employed him in various mis-

\* Bergeron, by a blunder in his translation from the original Latin, has stated that the khan sent 40,000 men to escort them. This has drawn the ire of the critics upon Marco Polo, who have cited it as one of his monstrous exaggerations.

sions and in important affairs. In this way he gathered all kinds of information respecting that vast empire.

After residing many years in Tartary, the Venetians at length longed to return to their native country. It was with great difficulty that the khan could be prevailed on to part with them. They set out on their return in the suite of certain envoys of the king of the Indies, who were conveying home a princess of Tartary to be espoused to their monarch. They were again provided by the munificent khan with tablets of gold, to serve, not merely as passports, but as orders upon all commanders in his territories for all necessary accommodations and supplies. They embarked in a fleet of fourteen sail, and coasted the shores of Asia to an island which they called Jana; from thence they traversed the Indian sea, and arrived at the court of the monarch of the Indies. After passing some time here, they had fresh tablets of gold given them by that sovereign to carry them in safety and honour through his kingdom. They had a long and difficult journey

to Constantinople ; from whence they set sail for Venice, and arrived there in 1295, in good health, and literally laden with riches.

Ramusio, in his preface to the narrative of Marco Polo, gives a variety of particulars concerning their arrival, which he compares to that of Ulysses. They were poorly clad, in coarse clothes made after the fashion of the Tartars. When they arrived at Venice, they were known by nobody. So many years had elapsed since their departure without any tidings of them, that they were either forgotten or considered dead. Beside their foreign garb, the influence of southern suns, and the similitude which men acquire to those among whom they reside for any length of time, had given them the look of Tartars rather than Italians.

They repaired to their own house, which was a noble palace afterwards known by the name of La Corte de la Milione. They found several of their relatives still inhabiting it ; but they were slow in recollecting the travellers, not knowing of their wealth, and probably considering them poor adventurers, returned to be a charge upon their

families. The Polos, however, took an effectual mode of quickening the memories of their friends, and ensuring themselves a loving reception. They invited them all to a grand banquet. When their guests arrived, they received them richly dressed in garments of crimson satin of oriental fashion. When the company were summoned to table, the travellers who had retired appeared again in still richer robes of crimson damask. The first dresses were cut up and distributed among the servants, being of such length that they swept the ground ; “ which,” says Ramusio, “ was the mode in those days with dresses worn within doors.” After they had tasted of the viands they again retired, and came in dressed in crimson velvet, the second dresses being likewise given to the domestics ; and the same was done at the end of the feast with their velvet robes, when they appeared in the Venetian dress of the day. The guests were lost in astonishment, and could not comprehend the meaning of this masquerade ; when, having dismissed all the attendants, Marco Polo brought forth the coarse Tartar dresses in which they had arrived : slashing these in several places with a knife, and ripping

open the seams and lining, there fell out a vast quantity of precious jewels, such as rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and diamonds. The whole table glittered with inestimable wealth, which they had acquired from the munificence of the grand khan, and which they had thus secretly conveyed through the perils of their long journey.

“The company,” observes Ramusio, “were filled with amazement, and now clearly perceived, what they had at first doubted, that these in very truth were those honoured and valiant gentlemen the Polos, and, accordingly, paid them great respect and reverence.”

The account of this curious feast is from Ramusio, who gives it on traditional authority; having heard it many times related by the illustrious Gasparo Malipiero, a very ancient gentleman and a senator, who had it from his father, who had it from his grandfather, and so on up to the fountain-head.

When the fame of this banquet came to be divulged throughout Venice, and the wealth also of the travellers, all the city, noble and simple, crowded to see the Polos, to caress and honour



them. Matteo, who was the eldest, was admitted to the dignity of the magistracy. The youth of the city came every day to visit and converse with Marco Polo, who was extremely amiable and communicative. They were insatiable in their inquiries about Cathay and the grand khan, which he answered with great courtesy, and gave them details with which they were vastly delighted; and as he always spoke of the wealth of the grand khan in round numbers, they gave him the name of Messer Marco Milioni.

Some months after their return, Lampa Doria, commander of the Genoese navy, appeared in the vicinity of the island of Cuzzola with seventy galleys. Andrea Dandolo, the Venetian admiral, was sent against him. Marco Polo commanded a galley of the fleet. His usual good fortune deserted him. Advancing the first in the line with his galley, and not being properly seconded, he was taken prisoner, thrown in irons, and carried to Genoa. Here he was detained for a long time in prison, and all offers of ransom rejected. His imprisonment gave great uneasiness to his father and uncle, fearing that he might never return.



Seeing themselves in this unhappy state, with so much treasure and no heirs, they consulted together. They were both very old men, but Nicolo, observes Ramusio, was of a galliard complexion: it was determined he should take a wife. He did so; and, to the wonder of his friends, in four years had three children.

In the meanwhile the fame of Marco Polo's travels had circulated in Genoa. His prison was daily crowded with nobility, and he was supplied with every thing that could cheer him in his confinement. A Genoese gentleman, who visited him every day, at length prevailed upon him to write an account of what he had seen. He had his papers and journals sent to him from Venice, and, with the assistance of his friends, produced the work which afterwards made such a noise throughout the world.

The merit of Marco Polo at length procured him his liberty. He returned to Venice, where he found his father with a house full of children. He took it in good part, followed the old man's example, married, and had two daughters, Moretta and Fantina. The three sons of his father

by the second marriage died without male issue, and the family of Polo was extinguished in 1417.

Such are the principal particulars known of Marco Polo ; a man whose travels for a long time made a great noise in Europe, and will be found to have had a great effect on modern discovery. His splendid account of the extent, wealth, and population of the Tartar territories filled every one with admiration. The possibility of bringing all those regions under the dominion of the church, and rendering the grand khan an obedient vassal to the holy chair, was for a long time a favourite topic among the enthusiastic missionaries of Christendom ; and there were many who undertook to effect the conversion of this magnificent infidel.

Even at the distance of two centuries, when the enterprises for the discovery of a new route to India had excited so many speculations about these remote regions of the East, the conversion of the grand khan became again a popular theme ; and it was too speculative and romantic an enterprise not to catch the vivid imagination of Columbus. In all his voyages he will be found continually to be seeking after the territories of

the grand khan ; and even after his last expedition, when nearly worn out by age, hardships, and infirmities, he offered, in a letter to the Spanish monarchs, written from a bed of sickness, to conduct any missionary to the territories of the Tartar emperor who would undertake his conversion.



No. XIX.

THE WORK OF MARCO POLO.

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THE work of Marco Polo is stated by some to have been originally written in Latin\*, though the most probable opinion is that it was written in Italian. Copies of it in manuscript were multiplied and rapidly circulated; translations were made into various languages, until the invention of printing enabled it to be widely diffused throughout Europe.

In the course of these translations and successive editions, the original text, according to Purchas, has been much vitiated, and it is probable many extravagances in numbers and measurements, with which Marco Polo is charged, may be the errors of translators and printers.

When the work first appeared, it was considered by some as made up of fictions and extravagances;

\* Prevost, *Hist. des Voyages*, t. xxvii. l. 4. ch. 3. Paris, 1549.

but Vossius assures us that it was at one time highly esteemed among the learned.

Francis Pepin, author of the *Brandenburgh* version, styles Polo a man commendable for his devoutness, prudence, and fidelity. Athanasius Kircher, in his account of China, says, that none of the ancients have described the kingdoms of the remote parts of the East with more exactness. Various other learned men have borne testimony to his character, and most of the substantial points of his work have been authenticated by subsequent travellers. It is manifest, however, that he dealt much in exaggeration. The historical part of his work is full of errors and fables. He confuses the names of places, is very inexact as to distances, and gives no latitudes of the places he visited.

It has been strongly doubted whether he really visited all the countries he described, and whether his account of Tartary and Cathay, and of different parts of India and the African coasts, were not taken from Mahometan narrations.

Ramusio thinks that a great part of the third book was collected by him from narrations of

mariners of the Indian seas. Athanasius Kircher is at a loss to know why he makes no mention of the great wall of China, which he must have passed, unless he visited that country by water.

The most probable opinion given concerning him is, that he really visited part of the countries which he describes, and collected information from various sources concerning the others; that he kept no regular journal, but after his return home composed his work from various memorandums, and from memory. Thus what he had seen and what he had heard became mixed up in his mind; and floating fables of the East were noted down with as much gravity and authority as well ascertained facts. Much has been said of a map brought from Cathay by Marco Polo, which was preserved in the convent of St. Michael de Murano in the vicinity of Venice, and in which the Cape of Good Hope and the island of Madagascar were indicated; countries which the Portuguese claim the merit of having discovered two centuries afterwards. It has been suggested also that Columbus had visited the convent and examined the map, from whence he derived some of his ideas con-



cerning the coast of India. According to Ramusio, however, who had been at the convent, and was well acquainted with the prior of it, the map preserved there was one copied by a friar from the original one of Marco Polo, and many alterations and additions had since been made by other hands, so that for a long time it lost all credit with judicious people, until, in company with the work of Marco Polo, it was found in the main to agree with his descriptions\*. The Cape of Good Hope was doubtless among the alterations made subsequent to the discoveries of the Portuguese. Columbus makes no mention of this map, which he most probably would have done had he seen it. He seems to have been entirely guided by the one furnished by Paulo Toscanelli, and which was apparently projected after the original map, or after the descriptions of Marco Polo and the maps of Ptolemy.

When the attention of the world was turned towards the remote parts of Asia in the fifteenth century, and the Portuguese were making their attempts to circumnavigate Africa, the narration

\* Ramusio, v. ii. p. 17.

of Marco Polo again rose to notice. This, with the travels of Nicolo le Conte, the Venetian, and of Hieronimo da San Stefano, a Genoese, are said to have afforded the information by which the Portuguese guided themselves in their voyages\*.

Above all, the influence which the work of Marco Polo had over the mind of Columbus gives it particular interest and importance. It was evidently an oracular work with him. He is supposed to have had a manuscript copy by him. He frequently quotes it; and on his voyages, supposing himself to be on the Asiatic coast, he is continually endeavouring to discover the islands and main lands described in it, and to find the famous Cipango.

It is proper therefore to specify some of those places, and the manner in which they are described by the Venetian traveller, that the reader may more fully understand the anticipations which were haunting the mind of Columbus in his voyages among the West Indian islands, and along the coast of Terra Firma.

\* Hist. des Voyages, tom. xl. l. 11. ch. 3.

The principal residence of the great khan, according to Marco Polo, was in the city of Cambalu (since ascertained to be Pekin), in the province of Cathay. This city, he says, was twenty-four miles square, and admirably built. It was impossible, according to Marco Polo, to describe the vast amount and variety of merchandise and manufactures brought there ; it would seem as if there were enough to furnish the universe.

“ Here are to be seen in wonderful abundance the precious stones, the pearls, the silks, and the diverse perfumes of the East : scarce a day passes that there does not arrive nearly a thousand cars laden with silks, of which they make admirable stuffs in this city.

“ The palace of the great khan is magnificently built, and four miles in circuit. It is rather a group of palaces. In the interior it is resplendent with gold and silver ; and in it are guarded the precious vases and jewels of the sovereign.” All the appointments of the khan for war, for the chase, for various festivities, are described in gorgeous terms.

But though Marco Polo is magnificent in his description of the province of Cathay and its imperial city of Cambalu, he outdoes himself when he comes to describe the province of Mangi. This province is supposed to be the southern part of China. It contained, he says, twelve hundred cities. The capital, Quinsai, supposed to be the city of Hang-cheu, was twenty-five miles from the sea; but communicated, by a river, with a port situated on the sea-coast, and had great trade with India.

The name Quinsai, according to Marco Polo, signifies the city of heaven: he says he has been in it, and examined it diligently, and affirms it to be the largest in the world; and so it undoubtedly is, if the measurement of the traveller is to be taken for truth. He declares that it is one hundred miles in circuit\*; that it is built upon little islands like Venice, and has twelve thousand stone bridges†, the arches of which are so high

\* Mandeville, speaking of Cambalu, says it is ten miles of Lombardy in circuit, which makes eight miles.

† Another blunder in translation has drawn upon Marco Polo the indignation of George Hornius, who, in his *Origin of America*, iv. 3, exclaims, "Who can believe all that he says of the city of Quinsay? As for example,

that the largest vessels can pass under them without lowering their masts. It has three thousand baths. It has six hundred thousand families. It abounds with magnificent houses, and has a lake thirty miles in circuit within its walls, on the banks of which are superb palaces of people of rank. The inhabitants of Quinsai are very voluptuous, and indulge in all kinds of luxuries and delights, particularly the women, who are extremely beautiful. There are many merchants and artisans; but the masters do not work, they employ servants to do all their labour. The province of Mangi was conquered by the great khan, who divided it into nine kingdoms, appointing to each a tributary king. He drew from it an immense revenue, for the country abounded in gold, silver, silks, sugars, spices, and perfumes.

that it has stone bridges twelve thousand miles high!" &c. It is probable that many of the exaggerations in the accounts of Marco Polo are in fact the errors of his translators. Mandeville, speaking of this same city, which he calls Cansai, says it is built on the sea like Venice, and has 1200 bridges, on each of which is a tower.

## ZIPANGU, ZIPANGRI, OR CIPANGO.

FIFTEEN hundred miles from the shores of Mangi, in the ocean, lay the great island of Zipangri, or as Columbus writes it, Cipango, and which is supposed to be Japan. Marco Polo describes it as abounding in gold, which however the king seldom permits to be transported out of the island. The king has a magnificent palace covered with plates of gold, as in other countries the roofs of the palaces are covered with sheets of lead or copper. The halls and chambers are likewise covered with gold ; the windows adorned with it ; the very floors paved with it, sometimes in plates of the thickness of two fingers. The island also produces vast quantities of the largest and finest pearls, together with a variety of precious stones, so that in fact it abounds in riches. The great khan made several attempts to conquer this island, but in vain ; which is not to be wondered at if what Marco Polo relates be true, that the inhabitants had certain stones of a charmed virtue tied to their arms, which, through the power of diabolical enchant-

ments, rendered them invulnerable. The island of Cipango was an object of diligent search to Columbus.

About the island of Zipangri or Cipango, and between it and the coast of Mangi, the sea, according to Marco Polo, is studded with small islands, to the number of seven thousand four hundred and forty-eight, of which the greater part are inhabited. There is not one which does not produce odoriferous trees, and perfumes in abundance. Columbus thought himself at one time in the midst of these islands.

These are the principal places described by Marco Polo, which occur in the letters and journals of Columbus. The island of Cipango was the first land he expected to make, and he intended to visit afterwards the province of Mangi, and to seek the great khan in his city of Cambalu in the province of Cathay.

Unless the reader bears in mind these sumptuous descriptions of Marco Polo, of countries teeming with wealth, and cities whose very domes and palaces flamed with gold, he will have but a faint idea of the splendid anticipations of Co-



lumbus, when he discovered, as he supposed, the extremity of Asia.

It was this confident expectation of soon arriving at these countries, and realizing the accounts of the Venetian, that induced him to hold forth those promises of immediate wealth to the sovereigns which caused so much disappointment, and brought upon him the frequent reproach of exciting false hopes and indulging in wilful exaggeration.



No. XX.

SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE.

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NEXT to Marco Polo, the travels of Sir John Mandeville, and his account of the territories of the great khan along the coast of Asia, seem to have been treasured up in the mind of Columbus.

Mandeville was born in the town of St. Alban's. He was devoted to study from his earliest childhood, and, after finishing his general education, applied himself to medicine. Having a great desire to see the remotest parts of the earth then known, that is to say, Asia and Africa, and above all to visit the Holy Land, he left England in 1332, and, passing through France, embarked at Marseilles. According to his own account, he visited Turkey, Armenia, Egypt, Upper and Lower Libya, Syria, Persia, Chaldea, Ethiopia, Tartary, Amazonia, and the Indies, residing in their principal cities. But most, he says, he de-

lighted in the Holy Land, where he remained for a long time, examining it with the greatest minuteness, and endeavouring to follow all the traces of our Saviour. After an absence of thirty-four years he returned to England, but found himself forgotten and unknown by the greater part of his countrymen, and a stranger in his native place. He wrote a history of his travels in three languages, English, French, and Latin, for he was master of many tongues. He addressed his work to Edward III. His wanderings do not seem to have made him either pleased with the world at large or contented with his home. He railed at the age, saying that there was no more virtue extant; that the church was ruined, error prevalent among the clergy, simony upon the throne, and, in a word, that the devil reigned triumphant. He soon returned to the continent, and died at Liege in 1372. He was buried in the abbey of the Gulielmites, in the suburbs of that city, where Ortelius in his *Itinerarium Belgiæ* says that he saw his monument, on which was the effigy, in stone, of a man with a forked beard and his hands raised towards his head, probably folded

as in prayer, according to the manner of old tombs, and a lion at his feet. There was an inscription stating his name, quality, and calling, viz. professor of medicine, that he was very pious, very learned, and very charitable to the poor, and that, after having travelled over the whole world, he had died at Liege. The people of the convent showed also his spurs, and the housing of the horses which he had ridden on his travels.

The descriptions given by Mandeville of the grand khan, of the province of Cathay and the city of Cambalú, are scarcely less extravagant than those of Marco Polo. The royal palace was more than two leagues in circumference. The grand hall had twenty-four columns of copper and gold. There were more than three hundred thousand men occupied, and living in and about the palace, of which more than one hundred thousand were employed in taking care of the elephants, of which there were ten thousand, and of a vast variety of other animals, birds of prey, falcons, parrots, and paroquets. On days of festival there were even twice the number of men employed. The title of this potentate in his

letters was, “Khan, the son of God, exalted possessor of all the earth, master of those who are masters of others.” On his seal was engraved, “God reigns in heaven, Khan upon earth.”

Mandeville has become proverbial for indulging in a traveller's exaggerations ; yet his accounts of the countries which he visited have been found far more veracious than had been imagined. His descriptions of Cathay, and the wealthy province of Mangi, agreeing with those of Marco Polo, had great authority with Columbus.

No. XXI.

THE ZONES.

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THE zones were imaginary bands or circles in the heavens, producing an effect of climate on corresponding belts on the globe of the earth. The polar circles and the tropics mark these divisions.

The central region, lying beneath the track of the sun, was termed the torrid zone ; the two regions between the tropics and the polar circles were termed the temperate zones ; and the remaining parts, between the polar circles and the poles, the frigid zones.

The frozen regions near the poles were considered uninhabitable and unnavigable on account of the extreme cold. The burning zone, or rather the central part of it, immediately about the equator, was considered uninhabitable, unproductive, and impassable, in consequence of the ex-



cessive heat. The temperate zones, lying between them, were supposed to be fertile and salubrious, and suited to the purposes of life.

The globe was divided into two hemispheres by the equator, an imaginary line, encircling it at equal distance from the poles. The whole of the world known to the ancients was contained in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere.

It was imagined that, if there should be inhabitants in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere, there could still be no communication with them on account of the burning zone which intervened.

Parmenides, according to Strabo, was the inventor of this theory of the five zones, but he made the torrid zone extend on each side of the equator beyond the tropics. Aristotle supported this doctrine of the zones. In his time, nothing was known of the extreme northern parts of Europe and Asia, nor of interior Ethiopia, and the southern part of Africa, extending beyond the tropic of Capricorn to the Cape of Good Hope. Aristotle believed that there was habitable earth in the southern hemisphere, but that it was for ever

divided from the part of the world already known, by the impassable zone of scorching heat at the equator\*.

Pliny supported the opinion of Aristotle concerning the burning zones. "The temperature of the central region of the earth," he observes, "where the sun runs his course, is burnt up as with fire. The temperate zones, which lie on either side, can have no communication with each other in consequence of the fervent heat of this region†."

Strabo (lib. ii.), in mentioning this theory, gives it likewise his support; and others of the ancient philosophers, as well as the poets, might be cited, to show the general prevalence of the belief.

It must be observed that, at the time when Columbus defended his proposition before the learned at Salamanca, the ancient theory of the burning zone had not yet been totally disproved by modern discovery. The Portuguese, it is true, had penetrated within the tropics; but though the whole of the space between the tropic of Cancer and that of Capricorn in common parlance was

\* Aristotle, Met. ii. cap. 5.

† Pliny, lib. i. c. 61.

termed the torrid zone, the uninhabitable and impassable part, strictly speaking, according to the doctrine of the ancients, only extended a limited number of degrees on each side of the equator, forming about a third, or at most the half of the zone. The proofs which Columbus endeavoured to draw, therefore, from the voyages made to St. George la Mina, were not conclusive with those who were bigoted to the ancient theory, and who placed this scorching region still farther southward and immediately about the equator.

No. XXII.

OF THE ATALANTIS OF PLATO.

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THE island, Atalantis is mentioned by Plato in his dialogue of Timæus. Solon, the Athenian law-giver, is supposed to have travelled into Egypt. He is in an ancient city on the Delta, the fertile island formed by the Nile, and is holding converse with certain learned priests on the antiquities of remote ages, when one of them gives him a description of the island of Atalantis and of its destruction, which he describes as having taken place before the conflagration of the world by Phaeton.

This island, he was told, had been situated in the Western Ocean, opposite to the Straits of Gibraltar. There was an easy passage from it to other islands, which lay adjacent to a large continent, exceeding in size all Europe and Asia. Neptune settled in this island, from whose son,

Atlas, its name was derived, and he divided it among his ten sons. His descendants reigned here in regular succession for many ages. They made irruptions into Europe and Africa, subduing all Libya as far as Egypt, and all Europe to Asia Minor.

They were resisted, however, by the Athenians, and driven back to their Atlantic territories. Shortly after this there was a tremendous earthquake, and an overflowing of the sea, which continued for a day and a night. In the course of this, the vast island of Atalantis and all its splendid cities and warlike nations were swallowed up and sunk to the bottom of the sea, which, spreading its waters over the chasm, formed the Atlantic Ocean. For a long time, however, the sea was not navigable, on account of rocks and shelves, of mud and slime, and of the ruins of that drowned country.

Many, in modern times, have considered this a mere fable : others suppose that Plato, while in Egypt, had received some vague accounts of the Canary Islands ; and, on his return to Greece, finding those islands so entirely unknown to his

countrymen, had made them the seat of his political and moral speculations. Some, however, have been disposed to give greater weight to this story of Plato. They imagine that such an island may really have existed, filling up a great part of the Atlantic, and that the continent beyond it was America, which, in such case, was not unknown to the ancients. Kircher supposes it to have been an island extending from the Canaries to the Azores; that it was really ingulfed in one of the convulsions of the globe, and that those small islands are mere shattered fragments of it.

As a further proof that the New World was not unknown to the ancients, many have cited the singular passage in the *Medea* of Seneca, which is wonderfully apposite, and shows at least how nearly the warm imagination of a poet may approach to prophecy. The predictions of the ancient oracles were rarely so unequivocal.

“ Venient annis

Sæcula seris, quibus Oceanus

Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens

Pateat tellus, typhisque novos

Detegat Orbes, nec sit terris

Ultima Thulc.”

Gosselin, in his able research into the voyages of the ancients, supposes the Atalantis of Plato to have been nothing more nor less than one of the nearest of the Canaries, viz. Fortaventura or Lancerote.



No. XXIII.

THE IMAGINARY ISLAND OF ST. BRANDAN.

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ONE of the most singular geographical illusions on record is that which, for a long while, haunted the imaginations of the inhabitants of the Canaries. They fancied they beheld a mountainous island, of about ninety leagues in length, lying far to the westward. It was only seen at intervals, though in perfectly clear and serene weather. To some it seemed one hundred leagues distant, to others forty, to others only fifteen or eighteen\*.

On attempting to reach it, however, it somehow or other eluded the search, and was nowhere to be found. Still there were so many persons of credibility who concurred in testifying to their having seen it, and the testimony of the inha-

\* Teyjoo, *Theatro Critico*, tom. iv. d. 10. sect. 29.

bitants of different islands agreed so well as to its form and position, that its existence was generally believed; and geographers inserted it in their maps. It is laid down on the globe of Martin Behem, projected in 1492, as delineated by M. De Murr, and it will be found in most of the maps of the time of Columbus, placed commonly about 200 leagues west of the Canaries. During the time that Columbus was making his proposition to the court of Portugal, an inhabitant of the Canaries applied to king John II. for a vessel to go in search of this island. In the archives of the Torre di Tombo \*, also, there is a record of a contract made by the crown of Portugal with Fernando de Ulmo, cavalier of the royal household, and captain of the island of Tercera, wherein he undertakes to go, at his own expense, in quest of an island, or islands, or terra firma, supposed to be the Island of the Seven Cities, on condition of having jurisdiction over the same, for himself and his heirs, allowing one-tenth of the revenues to the king. This Ulmo, finding the expedition

\* Lib. iv. de la Chancclaria del Rey Don Juan II. fol. 101.

above his capacity, associated one Juan Alphonso del Estreito in the enterprise. They were bound to be ready to sail with two caravels in the month of March, 1487 \*. The fate of their enterprise is unknown.

The name of St. Brandan, or Borondan, given to this imaginary island from time immemorial, is said to be derived from a Scotch abbot, who flourished in the sixth century, and who is called sometimes by the foregoing appellations, sometimes St. Blandano or St. Blandanus. In the martyrology of the order of St. Augustine, he is said to have been the patriarch of 3,000 monks. About the middle of the sixth century, he accompanied his disciple, St. Maclovio or St. Malo, in search of certain islands, possessing the delights of paradise, which they were told existed in the midst of the ocean, and were inhabited by infidels. After these most adventurous saints-errant had wandered for a long time upon the ocean, they at length landed upon an island called Ima. Here St. Malo found the body of a giant

\* Torre di Tombo, Lib. das Ylhas, f. 119.

lying in a sepulchre. He resuscitated him, and had much interesting conversation with him, the giant informing him that the inhabitants of that island had some notions of the Trinity, and moreover giving him an account of the torments which Jews and pagans suffered in the infernal regions. Finding the giant so docile and reasonable, St. Malo expounded to him the doctrines of the Christian religion, converted him, and baptized him by the name of Mildum. The giant, however, either through weariness of life, or eagerness to enjoy the benefits of his conversion, begged permission, at the end of fifteen days, to die again, which was granted him.

According to another account, the giant told them he knew of an island in the ocean defended by walls of burnished gold, so resplendent that they shone like crystal, but to which there was no entrance. At their request he undertook to guide them to it, and taking the cable of their ship, threw himself into the sea. He had not proceeded far, however, when a tempest arose and obliged them all to return, and shortly after the giant

died \*. A third legend makes the saint pray to Heaven, on Easter-day, that they may be permitted to find land where they may celebrate the offices of religion with becoming state : an island immediately appears, on which they land, perform a solemn mass, and the sacrament of the Eucharist ; after which, reimbarking and making sail, they behold to their astonishment the supposed island suddenly plunge to the bottom of the sea, being nothing else than a monstrous whale†. When the rumour circulated of an island seen from the Canaries, which always eluded the search, the legends of St. Brandan were revived, and applied to this unapproachable land. We are told also, that there was an ancient Latin manuscript in the archives of the cathedral church of the Grand Canary, in which the adventures of these saints were recorded. Through carelessness, however, this manuscript has disappeared‡. Some have maintained that this island was known to the ancients, and was the same mentioned by Ptolemy among the Fortunate or Canary Islands, by the name of

\* Fr. Gregorio García, *Origen de los Indios*, l. i. c. 9.

† Sigeberto, *Epist. ad Teitmar. Abbat.*

‡ Nuñez de la Pena, *Conquist de la Gran Canaria*.

Aprositus \*, a Greek word, signifying inaccessible ; and which, according to friar Diego Philipo, in his book on the incarnation of Christ, shows that it possessed the same quality in ancient times of deluding the eye, and being unattainable to the feet of mortals †. But whatever belief the ancients may have had on the subject, it is certain that it took a strong hold on the faith of the moderns during the prevalent rage for discovery ; nor did it lack abundant testimonials. Don Joseph de Viera y Clavijo says, there never was a more difficult paradox or problem in the science of geography ; since to affirm the existence of this island is to trample upon sound criticism, judgment, and reason ; and to deny it, one must abandon tradition and experience, and suppose that many persons of credit had not the proper use of their senses ‡.

The belief in this island has continued long since the time of Columbus. It was repeatedly seen, and by various persons at a time, always in the same place and the same form. In 1526, an expedition set off for the Canaries in quest of it, commanded

\* Ptolemy, l. iv. t. iv.

† Fr. D. Philipo, lib. viii. fol. 25.

‡ Hist. Isl. Can. l. i. c. xxviii.



by Fernando de Troya and Fernando Alvarez. They cruised in the wonted direction, but in vain; and their failure ought to have undeceived the public. "The phantasm of the island, however," says Viera, "had such a secret enchantment for all who beheld it, that the public preferred doubting the good conduct of the explorers than their own senses." In 1570 the appearances were so repeated and clear, that there was a universal fever of curiosity awakened among the people of the Canaries, and it was determined to send forth another expedition. That they might not appear to act upon light grounds, an exact investigation was previously made of all the persons of talent and credibility who had seen these apparitions of land, or who had other proofs of its existence.

Alonzo de Espinosa, governor of the island of Ferro, accordingly made a report, in which more than one hundred witnesses, several of them persons of the highest respectability, deposed that they had beheld the unknown island about forty leagues to the north-west of Ferro; that they had contemplated it with calmness and certainty, and had seen the sun set behind one of its points.



Testimonials of still greater force came from the islands of Palma and Teneriffe. There were certain Portuguese who affirmed that, being driven about by a tempest, they had come upon the island of St. Borondon. Pedro Vello, who was the pilot of the vessel, asserted, that, having anchored in a bay, he landed with several of the crew. They drank fresh water in a brook, and beheld in the sand the print of footsteps, double the size of those of an ordinary man, and the distance between them was in proportion. They found a cross nailed to a neighbouring tree, near to which were three stones placed in form of a triangle, with signs of fire having been made among them, probably to cook shell-fish. Having seen much cattle and sheep grazing in the neighbourhood, two of their party, armed with lances, went into the woods in pursuit of them. The night was approaching, the heavens began to lower, and a harsh wind arose. The people on board the ship cried out that she was dragging her anchor, whereupon Vello entered the boat, and hurried on board. In an instant they lost sight of land, being, as it were, swept away in the hurricane. When the storm had passed

away, and sea and sky were again serene, they searched in vain for the island ; not a trace of it was to be seen, and they had to pursue their voyage, lamenting the loss of their two companions who had been abandoned in the wood \*.

A learned licentiate, Pedro Ortiz de Funez, inquisitor of the Grand Canary, while on a visit at Teneriffe, summoned several persons before him who testified, having seen the island. Among them was one Marcos Verde, a man well known in those parts. He stated, that in returning from Barbary, and arriving in the neighbourhood of the Canaries, he beheld land, which, according to his maps and calculations, could not be any of the known islands. He concluded it to be the far-famed St. Borondon. Overjoyed at having discovered this land of mystery, he coasted along its spell-bound shores, until he anchored in a beautiful harbour, formed by the mouth of a mountain ravine. Here he landed with several of his crew. “ It was now,” he said, “ the hour of the Ave-Maria, or of vespers. The sun being set, the shadows began to spread over the land. The navigators having separated, wan-

\* Nuñez de la Pena, l. i. c. 1. Viera, Hist. Isl. Can. t. i. c. xxviii.

dered about in different directions, until out of hearing of each other's shouts. Those on board, seeing the night approaching, made signals to summon back the wanderers to the ship. They reembarked, intending to resume their investigations on the following day. Scarcely were they on board, however, when a whirlwind came rushing down the ravine with such violence as to drag the vessel from her anchor, and hurry her out to sea ; and they never saw any thing more of this hidden and inhospitable island."

Another testimony remains on record in a manuscript of one Abreu Galindo ; but whether taken at this time does not appear. It was that of a French adventurer, who, many years before, making a voyage among the Canaries, was overtaken by a violent storm which carried away his masts. At length the furious winds drove him to the shores of an unknown island covered with stately trees. Here he landed with part of his crew, and choosing a tree proper for a mast, cut it down, and began to shape it for his purpose. The guardian power of the island, however, resented as usual this invasion of his forbidden shores. The

heavens assumed a dark and threatening aspect; the night was approaching; and the mariners, fearing some impending evil, abandoned their labour, and returned on board. They were borne away as usual from the coast, and the next day arrived at the island of Palma\*.

The mass of testimony collected by official authority in 1570 seemed so satisfactory, that another expedition was fitted out in the same year in the island of Palma. It was commanded by Fernando de Villalobos, regidor of the island; but was equally fruitless with the preceding. St. Borondon seemed disposed only to tantalize the world with distant and serene glimpses of his ideal paradise, or to reveal it amidst storms to tempest-tost mariners; but to hide it completely from the view of all who diligently sought it. Still the people of Palma adhered to their favourite chimera. Thirty-four years afterwards, in 1605, they sent another ship on the quest, commanded by Gaspar Perez de Acosta, an accomplished pilot, accompanied by the Padre Lorenzo

\* Nuñez, Conquist de la Gran Canaria. Viera, Hist. &c.

Pinedo, a holy Franciscan friar, skilled in natural science. San Borondon, however, refused to reveal his island to either monk or mariner. After cruising about in every direction, sounding, observing the skies, the clouds, the winds, every thing that could furnish indications, they returned without having seen any thing to authorize a hope.

Upwards of a century now elapsed without any new attempt to seek this fairy island. Every now and then, it is true, the public mind was agitated by fresh reports of its having been seen. Lemons and other fruits, and the green branches of trees, which floated to the shores of Gomara and Ferro, were pronounced to be from the enchanted groves of San Borondon. At length, in 1721, the public infatuation again rose to such a height, that a fourth expedition was sent, commanded by Don Gaspar Dominguez, a man of probity and talent. As this was an expedition of solemn and mysterious import, he had two holy friars as apostolical chaplains. They made sail from the island of Teneriffe towards the end of October, leaving the populace in an indescribable state of anxious

curiosity. The ship, however, returned from its cruise as unsuccessful as all its predecessors.

We have no account of any expedition being since undertaken, though the island still continued to be a subject of speculation, and occasionally to reveal its shadowy mountains to the eyes of favoured individuals. In a letter written from the island of Gomera, 1759, by a Franciscan monk to one of his friends, he relates having seen it from the village of Alaxero, at six in the morning of the third of May. It appeared to consist of two lofty mountains, with a deep valley between; and on contemplating it with a telescope, the valley or ravine appeared to be filled with trees. He summoned the curate, Antonio Joseph Manrique, and upwards of forty other persons, all of whom beheld it plainly\*.

Nor is this island delineated merely in ancient maps of the time of Columbus. It is laid down as one of the Canary Islands in a French map published in 1704; and Mons. Gautier, in a geographical chart annexed to his *Observations on Natural History*, published in 1755, places it five

\* Viera, *Hist. Isl. Can.* t. i. c. 28.



degrees to the west of the island of Ferro, in the 29th degree of N. latitude\*.

Such are the principal facts existing relative to the island of St. Brandan. Its reality was for a long time a matter of firm belief. It was in vain that repeated voyages and investigations proved its non-existence: the public, after trying all kinds of sophistry, took refuge in the supernatural, to defend their favourite chimera. They maintained that it was rendered inaccessible to mortals by divine providence, or by diabolical magic. Most inclined to the former. All kinds of extravagant fancies were indulged concerning it†: some confounded it with the fabled island of the Seven Cities, situated somewhere in the bosom of the ocean, where, in old times, seven bishops and their followers had taken refuge from the Moors. Some of the Portuguese imagined it to be the abode of their lost king Sebastian. The Spaniards pretended that Roderick, the last of their Gothic kings, had fled thither from the Moors, after the disastrous battle of the Guadalete. Others sug-

\* Viera, *Hist. Isl. Can.* t. i. c. 28.

† Viera, *ubi sup.*



gested that it might be the seat of the terrestrial paradise ; the place where Enoch and Elijah remained in a state of blessedness until the final day ; and that it was made at times apparent to the eyes, but invisible to the search of mortals. Poetry, it is said, has owed to this popular belief one of its beautiful fictions ; and the garden of Armida, where Rinaldo was detained enchanted, and which Tasso places in one of the Canary Islands, has been identified with the imaginary San Borondon\*.

The learned father Feyjoo † has given a philosophical solution to this geographical problem. He attributes all these appearances, which have been so numerous and so well authenticated as not to admit of doubt, to certain atmospherical deceptions, like that of the *Fata Morgana*, seen at times in the straits of Messina, where the city of Reggio and its surrounding country is reflected in the air above the neighbouring sea ; a phenomenon which has likewise been witnessed in front of the city of Marseilles. As to the tales

\* Viera, *Hist. Isl. Can.*

† *Theatro Critico*, t. iv. d. 10.

of the mariners who had landed on these forbidden shores, and been hurried from thence in whirlwinds and tempests, he considers them as mere fabrications.

As the populace, however, reluctantly give up any thing that partakes of the marvellous and mysterious, and as the same atmospherical phenomena which first gave birth to the illusion may still continue, it is not improbable that a belief in the island of St. Brandan may still exist among the ignorant and credulous of the Canaries, and that they at times behold its fairy mountains rising above the distant horizon of the Atlantic.

No. XXIV.

THE ISLAND OF THE SEVEN CITIES.

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ONE of the popular traditions concerning the ocean which were current during the time of Columbus, was that of the island of the Seven Cities. It was recorded in an ancient legend, that at the time of the conquest of Spain and Portugal by the Moors, when the inhabitants fled in every direction to escape from slavery, seven bishops, followed by a great number of their people, took shipping, and abandoned themselves to their fate on the high seas. After tossing about for some time, they landed upon an unknown island in the midst of the ocean. Here the bishops burnt the ships to prevent the desertion of their followers, and founded seven cities. Various pilots of Portugal, it was said, had reached that island at different times, but had never returned to give any information concerning

it, having been detained, according to subsequent accounts, by the successors of the bishops, to prevent pursuit. At length, according to common report, at the time that prince Henry of Portugal was prosecuting his discoveries, several seafaring men presented themselves one day before him, and stated that they had just returned from a voyage, in the course of which they had landed upon the island. The inhabitants, they said, spoke their language, and carried them immediately to church, to ascertain whether they were Catholics, and were rejoiced at finding them of the true faith. They then made earnest inquiries to know whether the Moors still retained possession of Spain and Portugal. While part of the crew were at church, the rest gathered sand on the shore for the use of the kitchen, and found, to their surprise, that one-third of it was gold. The islanders were anxious that the crew should remain with them a few days, until the return of their governor, who was absent; but the mariners, afraid of being detained, embarked and made sail. Such was the story they told to prince Henry, hoping to receive reward

for their intelligence. The prince, it is said, expressed displeasure at their hasty departure from the island, and ordered them to return and procure further information ; but the men, apprehensive no doubt of having the falsehood of their tale discovered, made their escape, and nothing more was heard of them \*.

This story had much currency. The island of the Seven Cities was identified with the island mentioned by Aristotle as having been discovered by the Carthaginians ; and was inserted in the early maps about the time of Columbus under the name of Antilla.

At the time of the discovery of New Spain, extravagant reports were brought to Hispaniola of the civilization of the country ; that the people wore clothing, that their houses and temples were solid, spacious, and often magnificent, and that crosses were occasionally found among them. Juan de Grivalja being despatched to explore the coast of Yucatan, reported that in sailing along it, he beheld with great wonder stately and beautiful

\* Hist. del Almirante, c. 10.

edifices of lime and stone, and many high towers that shone at a distance\*. For a time the old tradition of the Seven Cities was revived, and many thought that they were to be found in the same part of New Spain.

\* Torquemada, *Monarquía Indiana*, l. iv. c. 4. *Origen de los Indios*, por Fr. Gregorio García, l. iv. c. 20.

DISCOVERY OF THE ISLAND OF MADEIRA.

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THE discovery of Madeira by Macham rests principally upon the authority of Francisco Alcaforado, an esquire of prince Henry of Portugal, who composed an account of it for that prince. It does not appear to have obtained much faith among Portuguese historians. No mention is made of it in Barros: he attributes the first discovery of the island to Joam Gonsalez and Tristam Vaz, who, he said, descried it from Porto Santo, resembling a cloud on the horizon\*.

The abbé Prevost, however, in his *General History of Voyages*, vol. vi., seems inclined to give credit to the account of Alcaforado. “It was composed,” he observes, “at a time when the attention of the public would have exposed the least falsities; and no one was more capable than Alca-

\* Barros, *Asia*, Decad. I. l. i. cap. 3.



forado of giving an exact detail of this event, since he was of the number of those who participated in the second discovery." The narrative, as originally written, was overcharged with ornaments and digressions: it was translated into French, and published in Paris in 1671. The French translator had retrenched the ornaments, but scrupulously retained the facts. The story, however, is cherished in the island of Madeira, where a painting in illustration of it is still to be seen. The following is the purport of the French translation: I have not been able to procure the original of Alcaforado.

During the reign of Edward III. of England, a young man of great courage and talent, named Robert Macham, fell in love with a young lady of rare beauty, of the name of Anne Dorset. She was his superior in birth, and of a proud and aristocratic family; but the merit of Macham gained him the preference over all his rivals. The family of the young lady, to prevent her making an inferior alliance, obtained an order from the king to have Macham arrested and confined, until, by

arbitrary means, they married his mistress to a man of quality. As soon as the nuptials were celebrated, the nobleman conducted his beautiful and afflicted bride to his seat near Bristol. Macham was now restored to liberty. Indignant at the wrongs he had suffered, and certain of the affections of his mistress, he prevailed upon several friends to assist him in a project for the gratification of his love and his revenge. They followed hard on the traces of the new-married couple to Bristol : one of the friends obtained an introduction into the family of the nobleman in quality of a groom : he found the young bride full of tender recollections of her lover, and of dislike to the husband thus forced upon her. Through the means of this friend, Macham had several communications with her, and concerted means for their escape to France, where they might enjoy their mutual love unmolested.

When all things were prepared, the young lady rode out one day, accompanied only by the fictitious groom, under pretence of taking the air. No sooner were they out of sight of the house than they galloped to an appointed place on the

shore of the channel, where a boat awaited them. They were conveyed on board a vessel which lay with anchor a-trip and sails unfurled, ready to put to sea. Here the lovers were once more united. Fearful of pursuit, the ship immediately weighed anchor; they made their way rapidly along the coast of Cornwall, and Macham anticipated the triumph of soon landing with his beautiful prize on the shores of gay and gallant France. Unfortunately, an adverse and stormy wind arose in the night; at day-break they found themselves out of sight of land; the mariners were ignorant and inexperienced; they knew nothing of the compass, and it was a time when men were unaccustomed to traverse the high seas. For thirteen days the lovers were driven about on a tempestuous ocean, at the mercy of wind and wave. The fugitive bride was filled with terror and remorse, and looked upon this uproar of the elements as the anger of heaven directed against her. All the efforts of her lover could not remove from her mind a dismal presage of some approaching catastrophe.

At length the tempest subsided. On the four-

teenth day, at dawn, the mariners perceived what appeared to be a tuft of wood rising out of the sea ; they joyfully steered for it, supposing it to be an island : they were not mistaken. As they drew near, the rising sun shone upon noble forests, the trees of which were of a kind unknown to them ; flights of birds also came hovering about the ship, and perched upon the yards and rigging without any signs of fear.

The boat was sent on shore to reconnoitre, and soon returned with such accounts of the beauty of the country, that Macham determined to take his drooping companion to the land, in hopes her health and spirits might be restored by refreshment and repose. They were accompanied on shore by the faithful friends who had assisted in their flight : the mariners remained on board to guard the ship.

The country was indeed delightful : the forests were stately and magnificent ; there were trees laden with excellent fruits, others with aromatic flowers ; the waters were cool and limpid ; the sky serene ; and there was a balmy sweetness in

the air. The animals that they met with showed no signs of alarm or ferocity ; from which they concluded that the island was uninhabited. On penetrating a little distance they found a beautiful sheltered meadow, the green bosom of which was bordered by laurels, and refreshed by a mountain brook which ran sparkling over pebbles : in the centre was a majestic tree, the wide branches of which afforded shade from the rays of the sun. Here Macham had bowers constructed, and determined to pass a few days, hoping that the sweetness of the country, and the serene tranquillity of this delightful solitude, would recruit the drooping health and spirits of his companion.

Three days, however, had scarcely passed, when a violent storm arose from the north-east, and raged all night over the island. On the succeeding morning Macham repaired to the sea side, but nothing of his ship was to be seen, and he concluded that it had foundered in the tempest.

Consternation fell upon the little band thus left in an uninhabited island in the midst of the ocean. The blow fell most severely on the timid and re-

pentant bride. She had reproached herself with being the cause of all their misfortunes, and from the first had been haunted by dismal forebodings. She now considered them about to be accomplished, and her horror was so great as to deprive her of speech : she expired in three days, without uttering a word.

Macham was struck with despair at beholding the tragical end of this tender and beautiful being. He upbraided himself, in the transports of his grief, with tearing her from her home, her country and her friends, to perish upon a savage coast : all the efforts of his companions to console him were in vain ; he died within five days, broken-hearted, begging, as a last request, that his body might be interred beside that of his mistress, at the foot of a rustic altar which they had erected under the great tree. They set up a large wooden cross on the spot, on which was placed an inscription written by Macham himself, relating, in a few words, his piteous adventure, and praying any Christians who might arrive there to build a chapel in the place, dedicated to Jesus the Saviour.



After the death of their commander, his followers consulted about the means to escape from the island. The ship's boat remained on the shore : they repaired it, and put it in a state to bear a voyage, and then made sail, intending to return to England. Ignorant of their situation, and carried about by the winds, they were cast upon the coast of Morocco, where, their boat being shattered upon the rocks, they were captured by the Moors and thrown into prison. Here they understood that their ship had shared the same fate, having been driven from her anchorage in the tempest, and carried to the same inhospitable coast, where all her crew were made prisoners.

The prisons of Morocco were in those days filled with captives of all nations, taken by their cruisers. Here the English prisoners met with an experienced pilot, a Spaniard of Seville, named Juan de Morales : he listened to their story with great interest, inquired into the situation and description of the island they had discovered, and subsequently, on his redemption from prison, communicated the circumstances, it is said, to prince Henry of Portugal.



There is a difficulty in the above narrative of Alcaforado in reconciling dates. The voyage is said to have taken place during the reign of Edward III. which commenced in 1327, and ended in 1378. Morales, to whom the English communicated their voyage, is said to have been in the service of the Portuguese in the second discovery of Madeira in 1418 and 1420. Even if the voyage and imprisonment had taken place in the last year of king Edward's reign, this leaves a space of forty years.

Hakluyt gives an account of the same voyage, taken from Antonio Galvano : he varies in certain particulars. " It happened," he says, " in the year 1344, in the time of Peter IV. of Arragon. Macham cast anchor in a bay since called after him Machio. The lady being ill, he took her on shore, accompanied by some of his friends, and the ship sailed without them. After the death of the lady, Macham made a canoe out of a tree, and ventured to sea in it with his companions : they were cast upon the coast of Africa, where the Moors, considering it as a kind of miracle, carried

them to the king of their country, who sent him to the king of Castile. In consequence of the traditional accounts remaining of this voyage, Henry II. of Castile sent people, in 1395, to re-discover the island."

No. XXVI.

LAS CASAS.

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BARTHOLOMEW LAS CASAS, bishop of Chiapa, so often cited in all histories of the New World, was born at Seville, in 1474, and was of French extraction. The family name was Casaus. The first of the name who appeared in Spain served under the standard of Ferdinand III. surnamed the Saint, in his wars with the Moors of Andalusia. He was at the taking of Seville from the Moors, when he was rewarded by the king, and received permission to establish himself there. His descendants enjoyed the prerogatives of nobility, and suppressed the letter *u* in their name, to accommodate it to the Spanish tongue.

Antonio, the father of Bartholomew, went to Hispaniola with Columbus, in 1493, and returned rich to Seville in 1498\*. It has been stated by

\* Navarrete, Collec. Viag. t. i. Introd. p. lxx.

one of the biographers of Bartholomew Las Casas that he accompanied Columbus in his third voyage, in 1498, and returned with him in 1500\*. This, however, is incorrect. He was during that time completing his education at Salamanca, where he was instructed in Latin, dialectics, logic, metaphysics, ethics and physics, after the supposed method and principles of Aristotle. While at the university, he had as a servant an Indian slave given him by his father, who had received him from Columbus. When Isabella, in her transport of virtuous indignation, ordered the Indian slaves to be sent back to their country, this one was taken from Las Casas. The young man was aroused by the circumstance, and, on considering the nature of the case, became inflamed with a zeal in favour of the unhappy Indians, which never cooled throughout a long and active life. It was excited to tenfold fervour when, at about the age of twenty-eight years, he accompanied the commander Orando to Hispaniola, in 1502, and was an eyewitness to many of the cruel scenes which took place under his administration. The whole of

\* J. A. Llorente, *Œuvres de Las Casas*, p. 11. Paris, 1822.

his future life, a space exceeding sixty years, was devoted to vindicating the cause and endeavouring to ameliorate the sufferings of the natives. As a missionary, he traversed the wilderness of the New World in various directions, seeking to convert and civilize them; as a protector and champion, he made several voyages to Spain, vindicated their wrongs before courts and monarchs, wrote volumes in their behalf, and exhibited a zeal, and constancy, and intrepidity, worthy of an apostle. He died at the advanced age of ninety-two years, and was buried at Madrid, at the church of the Dominican convent of Atocha, of which fraternity he was a member.

Attempts have been made to decry the consistency and question the real philanthropy of Las Casas, in consequence of one of the expedients to which he resorted to relieve the Indians from the cruel bondage imposed upon them. This occurred in 1517, when he arrived in Spain on one of his missions to obtain measures in their favour from government. On his arrival in Spain he found cardinal Ximenes, who had been

left regent on the death of king Ferdinand; too ill to attend to his affairs. He repaired therefore to Valladolid, where he awaited the coming of the new monarch Charles, archduke of Austria, afterwards the emperor Charles V. He had strong opponents to encounter in various persons high in authority, who, holding estates and repartimientos in the colonies, were interested in the slavery of the Indians; among those, and not the least energetic, was the bishop Fonseca, president of the council of the Indies.

At length the youthful sovereign arrived, accompanied by various Flemings of his court, particularly his grand chancellor, doctor Juan de Salvagio, a learned and upright man, whom he consulted on all affairs of administration and justice. Las Casas soon became intimate with the chancellor, and stood high in his esteem; but so much opposition arose on every side, that he found his various propositions for the relief of the natives but little attended to. In his doubt and anxiety, he had now recourse to an expedient which he considered as justified by the circum-

stances of the case \*. The chancellor Salvagio and the other Flemings, who had accompanied the youthful sovereign, had obtained from him, before quitting Flanders, licenses to import slaves from Africa to the colonies: a measure which had recently, in 1516, been prohibited by a decree of cardinal Ximenes, while acting as regent. The chancellor, who was a humane man, reconciled it to his conscience by a popular opinion that one negro would perform, without detriment to his health, the labour of several Indians, and that, therefore, it was a great saving of human suffering. So easy it is for interest to wrap itself up in plausible argument! He might moreover have thought the welfare of the Africans but little affected by the change. They were accustomed to slavery in their own country, and they were said to thrive in the New World. "The Africans," observes Herrera, "prospered so much in the island of Hispaniola, that it was the opinion,

\* Herrera states this as an expedient adopted when all others failed. "Bartholome de Las Casas viendo que sus conceptos hallaban in todas partes dificultad, i que las opiniones que tenia, por mucha familiaridad que habia sequido, i gran credito con el grand canceller, no podian haber efecto, se volvio a otros expedientes," &c.—Decad. II. l. ii. c. xx.



unless a negro should happen to be hanged, he would never die ; for as yet none had been known to perish from infirmity. Like oranges, they found their proper soil in Hispaniola, and it seemed even more natural to them than their own native Guinea \*.”

Las Casas finding all other means ineffectual, endeavoured to turn these interested views of the grand chancellor to the benefit of the Indians. He proposed that the Spaniards resident in the colonies might be permitted to procure negroes for the labour of the farms and the mines, and other severe toils, which were above the strength and destructive of the lives of the natives†. He evidently considered the poor Africans as little better than mere animals ; and he acted like others, on an arithmetical calculation of diminishing human misery, by substituting one strong man for three or four of feebler nature. He moreover esteemed the Indians as a nobler and more intellectual race of beings, and their preservation and welfare of higher importance to the general interests of humanity.

\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. II. l. iii. c. iv.

† Idem, D. II. l. ii. c. xx.

It is this expedient of Las Casas which has drawn down severe censure upon his memory. He has been charged with gross inconsistency, and even with having originated "this inhuman traffic in the New World." This last is a grievous charge ; but historical facts and dates remove the original sin from his door, and prove that the practice existed in the colonies, and was authorized by royal decrees, long before he took a part in the question.

Las Casas did not go to the New World until 1502. By a royal ordinance passed in 1501, negro slaves were permitted to be taken there, provided they had been born among Christians\*. By a letter written by Ovando, dated 1503, it appears there were numbers in the island of Hispaniola at that time, and he entreats that none more might be permitted to be brought. In 1506, the Spanish government forbade the introduction of negro slaves from the Levant, or those brought up amongst the Moors, and stipulated that none should be taken to the colonies but those from Seville, who had been instructed in the Christian

\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. II. l. ii. c. viii.

faith, that they might contribute to the conversion of the Indians\*. In 1510, king Ferdinand, being informed of the physical weakness of the Indians, ordered fifty Africans to be sent from Seville to labour in the mines†. In 1511, he ordered that a great number should be procured from Guinea, and transported to Hispaniola, understanding that one negro could perform the work of four Indians‡. In 1512 and 1513, he signed further orders relative to the same subject. In 1516, Charles V. granted licences to the Flemings to import negroes to the colonies. It was not until the year 1517 that Las Casas gave his sanction to the traffic. It already existed, and he countenanced it solely with a view to having the hardy Africans substituted for the feeble Indians. It was advocated at the same time, and for the same reasons, by the Geronimite friars, who were missionaries in the colonies. The motives of Las Casas were purely benevolent, though founded on erroneous notions of justice. He thought to permit evil, that good might spring out of it; to choose be-

\* Herrera, D. I. l. vi. c. 20.

† Idem, Hist. Ind. D. I. l. viii. c. ix.

‡ Idem, D. I. l. ix. c. v.

tween two existing abuses, and to eradicate the greater by resorting to the lesser. His reasoning, however fallacious it may be, was considered satisfactory and humane by some of the most learned and benevolent men of the age, among whom was the cardinal Adrian, afterwards elevated to the papal chair, and characterized by gentleness and humanity. The traffic was permitted ; inquiries were made as to the number of slaves required, which was limited to four thousand ; and the Flemings obtained a monopoly of the trade, which they afterwards farmed out to the Genoese.

Dr. Robertson, in noticing this affair, draws a contrast between the conduct of the cardinal Ximenes, and that of Las Casas, strongly to the disadvantage of the latter. “ The cardinal,” he observes, “ when solicited to encourage this commerce, peremptorily rejected the proposition, because he perceived the iniquity of reducing one race of men to slavery, when he was consulting about the means of restoring liberty to another ; but Las Casas, from the inconsistency natural to men who hurry with headlong impetuosity towards

a favourite point, was incapable of making this distinction. In the warmth of his zeal to save the Americans from the yoke, he pronounced it to be lawful and expedient to impose one still heavier upon the Africans \*.”

This distribution of praise and censure is not perfectly correct. Las Casas had no idea that he was imposing a heavier, or so heavy, a yoke upon the Africans. The latter were considered more capable of labour, and less impatient of slavery. While the Indians sunk under their tasks, and perished by thousands in Hispaniola, the negroes, on the contrary, thrived there. Herrera, to whom Dr. Robertson refers as his authority, assigns a different motive, and one of mere finance, for the measure of cardinal Ximenes. He says, that he ordered that no one should take negroes to the Indies, because, as the natives were decreasing, and it was known that one negro did more work than four of them, there would probably be a great demand for African slaves, and a tribute might be imposed upon the trade, from which

\* Robertson, *Hist. America*, p. 3.

profit would result to the royal treasury \*. This measure was presently after carried into effect, though subsequent to the death of the cardinal, and licences were granted by the sovereign for pecuniary considerations. Flechier, in his life of Ximenes, assigns another, but a more political motive for this prohibition. The cardinal, he says, objected to the importation of negroes into the colonies, as he feared they would corrupt the natives, and, by confederacies with them, render them formidable to government. De Marsolier, another biographer of Ximenes, gives equally politic reasons for this prohibition. He cites a letter written by the cardinal on the subject, in which he observed that he knew the nature of the negroes : they were a people capable, it was true, of great fatigue, but extremely prolific and enterprising ; and that, if they had time to multiply in America, they would infallibly revolt, and impose on the Spaniards the same chains which they had

\* “ Porque como iban faltando los Indios, y se conocia, que un Negro trabajaba mas que quatro, por lo qual habia gran demanda de allos, parecia que se podia poner algun tributo en la saca, de que resultaria provecho a la real hacienda.”



compelled them to bear\*. These facts, while they take from the measure of the cardinal that credit for exclusive philanthropy which has been bestowed upon it, manifest the clear foresight of that able politician, whose predictions, with respect to negro revolt, have been so strikingly fulfilled in the island of Hispaniola.

Cardinal Ximenes, in fact, though a wise and upright statesman, was not troubled with scruples of conscience on these questions of natural right ; nor did he possess more toleration than his contemporaries towards savage and infidel nations. He was grand inquisitor of Spain, and was very efficient, during the latter years of Ferdinand, in making slaves of the refractory Moors of Granada. He authorized, by express instructions, expeditions to seize and enslave the Indians of the Carribbee Islands, whom he termed only suited to labour, enemies of the Christians, and cannibals. Nor will it be considered a proof of a gentle and tolerant policy, that he introduced the tribunal of the Inquisition into the New World. These circum-

\* De Marsolier, *Hist. du Ministère du Cardinal Ximenes*, l. vi. Toulouse, 1694.



stances are not cited to cast reproach upon the character of cardinal Ximenes, but to show how incorrectly he has been extolled at the expense of Las Casas. Both of them must be judged in connexion with the customs and opinions of the age in which they lived.

Las Casas was the author of many works, but few of which have been printed. The most important is a General History of the Indies, from their discovery to the year 1520, in three volumes. It exists only in manuscript, but is the fountain from which Herrera and most of the other historians of the New World have drawn large supplies. The work, though prolix, is valuable, as the author was an eye-witness of many of the facts, had others from persons who were concerned in the transactions recorded, and possessed copious documents. It displays great erudition, though somewhat crudely and diffusely introduced. His history was commenced in 1527, at fifty-three years of age, and was finished in 1559, when eighty-five. As many things are set down from memory, there is occasional inaccuracy; but the whole bears the stamp of sincerity and truth. The

author of the present work, having had access to this valuable manuscript, has made great use of it, drawing forth many curious facts hitherto neglected ; but he has endeavoured to consult it with caution, collating it with other authorities, and omitting whatever appeared to be dictated by prejudice or over-heated zeal.

Las Casas has been accused of high colouring and extravagant declamation, in those passages which relate to the barbarities practised on the natives ; nor is the charge entirely without foundation. The same zeal in the cause of the Indians is expressed in his writings that shone forth in his actions ; always pure, often vehement ; and occasionally unseasonable ; still, however, when he errs, it is in a generous and righteous cause. If one-tenth part of what he says he “ witnessed with his own eyes” be true, and his veracity is above all doubt, he would have been wanting in the natural feelings of humanity, had he not expressed himself in terms of indignation and abhorrence.

In the course of his work, when Las Casas mentions the original papers lying before him,

from which he drew many of his facts, it makes one lament that they should be lost to the world. Besides the journals and letters of Columbus, he says he had numbers of the letters of the Adelantado Don Bartholomew, who wrote better than his brother, and whose writings must have been full of energy. Above all, he had the map, formed from study and conjecture, by which Columbus sailed on his first voyage. What a precious document would this be for the world! These writings may still exist neglected and forgotten among the rubbish of some convent in Spain. Little hope can be entertained of discovering them in the present state of degeneracy of the cloister. The monks of Atocha, in a recent conversation with one of the royal princes, betrayed an ignorance that this illustrious man was buried in their convent, nor can any of the fraternity point out his place of sepulture to the stranger\*.

\* In this notice the author has occasionally availed himself of the interesting memoir of Mons. J. A. Llorente, prefixed to his collection of the works of Las Casas; collating it with the History of Herrera, from which its facts are principally derived.

The publication of this work of Las Casas has not been permitted in Spain, where every book must have the sanction of a censor before it is committed to the press. The horrible pictures it exhibits of the cruelties inflicted on the Indians would, it was imagined, excite an odium against their conquerors. Las Casas himself seems to have doubted the expediency of publishing it ; for, in 1560, he made a note with his own hand, which is preserved in the two first volumes of the original, mentioning that he left them, in confidence, to the college of the order of the Predicadores of St. Gregorio in Valladolid, begging of its prelates that no secular person, nor even the collegians, should be permitted to read his history for the space of forty years ; and that after that term it might be printed, if consistent with the good of the Indians and of Spain\*.

For the foregoing reason the work has been cautiously used by Spanish historians, passing over in silence, or with brief notice, many passages of disgraceful import. This feeling is natural, if not

\* Navarrete, Collec. Viag. t. i. Introd. p. lxxv.

commendable ; for the world is not prompt to discriminate between individuals and the nation of whom they are but a part. The laws and regulations for the government of the newly discovered countries, and the decisions of the council of the Indies on all contested points, though tinctured in some degree with the bigotry of the age, were distinguished for wisdom, justice, and humanity, and do honour to the Spanish nation. It was only in the abuse of them by individuals to whom the execution of the laws was intrusted, that these atrocities were committed. It should be remembered also, that the same nation which gave birth to the sanguinary and rapacious adventurers who perpetrated these cruelties, gave birth likewise to the early missionaries, like Las Casas who followed the sanguinary course of discovery, binding up the wounds inflicted by their countrymen : men who, in a truly evangelical spirit, braved all kinds of perils and hardships, and even death itself, not through a prospect of temporal gain or glory, but through a desire to ameliorate the condition and save the souls of barbarous and suffering nations.

The dauntless enterprises and fearful peregrinations of many of these virtuous men, if properly appreciated, would be found to vie in romantic daring with the heroic achievements of chivalry, excited by motives of a purer and far more exalted nature.

No. XXVII.

PETER MARTYR.

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PETER MARTIR, or MARTYR, of whose writings much use has been made in this history, was born at Anghierra, in the territory of Milan, in Italy, on the second of February, 1455. He is commonly termed Peter Martyr of *Angleria*, from the Latin name of his native place. He is one of the earliest historians that treat of Columbus, and was his contemporary and intimate acquaintance. He was born at Rome in 1487; and having acquired a distinguished reputation for learning, he was invited by the Spanish ambassador, the count de Tendilla, to accompany him to Spain. He willingly accepted the invitation, and was presented to the sovereigns at Saragossa. Isabella, amidst the cares of the war with Granada, was anxious for the intellectual advancement of her kingdom, and wished to employ Martyr to instruct the



young nobility of the royal household. With her peculiar delicacy, however, she first made her confessor, Hernando de Talavera, inquire of Martyr in what capacity he desired to serve her. Contrary to her expectation, Martyr replied, "in the profession of arms." The queen complied, and he followed her in her campaigns, as one of her household and military suite, but without distinguishing himself, and perhaps without having any particular employ in a capacity so foreign to his talents. After the surrender of Granada, when the war was ended, the queen, through the medium of the grand cardinal of Spain, prevailed upon him to undertake the instruction of the young nobles of her court.

Martyr was acquainted with Columbus while making his application to the sovereigns, and was present at his triumphant reception by Ferdinand and Isabella in Barcelona, on his return from his first voyage. He was continually in the royal camp during the war with the Moors, of which his letters contain many interesting particulars. He was sent ambassador extraordinary by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1501 to Venice, and thence

to the grand soldan of Egypt. The soldan, in 1490 or 1491, had sent an embassy to the Spanish sovereigns, threatening that, unless they desisted from the war against Granada, he would put all the Christians in Egypt and Syria to death, overturn all their temples, and destroy the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem. Ferdinand and Isabella pressed the war with tenfold energy, and brought it to a triumphant conclusion in the next campaign, while the soldan was still carrying on a similar negotiation with the Pope. They afterwards sent Peter Martyr ambassador to the soldan, to explain and justify their measure. Martyr discharged the duties of his embassy with great ability; obtained permission from the soldan to repair the holy places at Jerusalem, and an abolition of various extortions to which Christian pilgrims had been subjected. While on this embassy he wrote his work *De Legatione Babylonica*, which includes a history of Egypt in those times.

On his return to Spain, he was rewarded with places and pensions, and in 1524 was appointed a minister of the council of the Indies. His principal work is an account of the discoveries of the

New World, in eight Decades, each containing ten chapters. They are styled Decades of the New World, or Decades of the Ocean, and, like all his other works, were originally written in Latin, though since translated into various languages. He had familiar access to letters, papers, journals, and narratives of the early discoverers, and was personally acquainted with many of them, gathering particulars from their conversation. In writing his Decades, he took great pains to obtain information from Columbus himself, and from others, his companions.

In one of his epistles (No. 153, January 1494, to Pomponius Lætus) he mentions having just received a letter from Columbus, by which it appears he was in correspondence with him. Las Casas says that great credit is to be given to him with respect to those voyages of Columbus, although his Decades contain some inaccuracies relative to subsequent events in the Indies. Munoz allowed him great credit as a contemporary author, grave, well cultivated, instructed in the facts of which he treats, and of entire probity. He observes, however, that his writings, being composed on

the spur or excitement of the moment, often related circumstances which subsequently proved to be erroneous ; that they were written without method or care, often confusing dates and events, so that they must be read with some caution.

Martyr was in the daily habit of writing letters to distinguished persons, relating the passing occurrences of the busy court and age in which he lived. In several of these Columbus is mentioned, and also some of the chief events of his voyages, as promulgated at the very moment of his return. These letters not being generally known or circulated, or frequently cited, it may be satisfactory to the reader to have a few of the main passages which relate to Columbus. They have a striking effect in carrying us back to the very time of the discoveries.

In one of his epistles, dated Barcelona, May 1st, 1493, and addressed to C. Borromeo, he says, “ Within these few days a certain Christopher Columbus has arrived from the western antipodes : a man of Liguria, whom my sovereigns reluctantly intrusted with three ships, to seek that

region ; for they thought that what he said was fabulous. He has returned and brought specimens of many precious things, but particularly gold, which those countries naturally produce \*."

In another letter, dated likewise from Barcelona in September following, he gives a more particular account. It is addressed to count Tendilla, governor of Granada, and also to Hernando Talavera, archbishop of that diocese, and the same to whom the propositions of Columbus had been referred by the Spanish sovereigns.

" Listen," says Peter Martyr in his epistle, " to a new discovery. You remember Columbus the Ligurian, appointed in the camp by our sovereigns to search for a new hemisphere of land at the western antipodes. You ought to recollect, for you had some agency in the transaction ; nor would the enterprise, as I think, have been undertaken without your counsel. He has returned in safety, and relates the wonders he has discovered. He exhibits gold as proof of the mines in those regions ; gosampine cotton also, and aromatics, and pepper more pungent than that from Caucasus. All

\* Opus Epist. P. Martyris Anglerii. Epist. 131.

these things, together with scarlet dye-wood, the earth produces spontaneously. Pursuing the western sun from Gades five thousand miles, as he relates, he fell in with sundry islands, and took possession of one of them, of greater circuit, he asserts, than the whole of Spain. Here he found a race of men living contented in a state of nature, subsisting on fruits and vegetables, and bread formed from roots. These people have kings, some greater than others, and they war occasionally among themselves, with bows and arrows, or lances sharpened and hardened in the fire. The desire of command prevails among them, though they are naked. They have wives also. What they worship, except the divinity of heaven, is not ascertained \*,” &c.

In another letter, dated likewise in September, 1493, and addressed to the cardinal and vice-chancellor Ascanius Sforza, he says :

“ So great is my desire to give you satisfaction, illustrious prince, that I consider it a gratifying occurrence in the great fluctuations of events, when any thing takes place among us in which

\* Idem, Epist. 134.



you may take an interest. The wonders of this terrestrial globe, round which the sun makes a circuit in the space of four-and-twenty hours, have, until our time, as you are well aware, been known only in regard to one hemisphere, merely from the golden Chersonesus to our Spanish Gades. The rest has been given up as unknown by cosmographers; and if any mention of it has been made, it has been slight and dubious. But now, O blessed enterprise! under the auspices of our sovereigns, what has hitherto lain hidden since the first origin of things has at length begun to be developed. The event has thus occurred. Attend, illustrious prince! A certain Christopher Columbus, a Ligurian, despatched to those regions with three vessels by my sovereigns, pursuing the western sun above five thousand miles from Gades, achieved his way to the antipodes. Three-and-thirty successive days they navigated, with nought but land and water. At length, from the mast-head of the largest vessel, in which Columbus himself sailed, those on the look out proclaimed the sight of land. He coasted along six islands, one of them, as all his followers declare, beguiled per-



chance by the novelty of the scene, is larger than Spain." Martyr proceeds to give the usual account of the productions of the islands, and the manners and customs of the natives, particularly the wars which occurred among them; "as if *meum* and *tuum* had been introduced among them as among us, and expensive luxuries, and the desire of accumulating wealth; for what, you will think, can be the wants of naked men? What further may take place," he adds, "I will in future relate. Farewell \*."

In another letter, dated Valladolid, February 1st, 1494, to Hernando de Talavera, archbishop of Granada, he observes, "The king and queen, on the return of Columbus to Barcelona, from his honourable enterprise, appointed him admiral of the ocean sea, and caused him, on account of his illustrious deeds, to be seated in their presence; an honour and a favour, as you know, the highest with our sovereigns. They have despatched him again to those regions, furnished with a fleet of eighteen ships. There is

\* Idem, Epist. 135.

prospect of great discoveries at the western ant-arctic antipodes \*."

In a subsequent letter to Pomponius Lætus, dated from Alcala de Henares, December 9th, 1494, he gives the first news of the success of this expedition.

"Spain," says he, "is spreading her wings, augmenting her empire, and extending her name and glory to the antipodes. \* \* \* \* \* Of eighteen vessels despatched by my sovereigns with the admiral Columbus, in his second voyage to the western hemisphere, twelve have returned, and have brought gosampine cotton, huge trees of dye-wood, and many other articles held with us as precious, the natural productions of that hitherto hidden world; and, beside all other things, no small quantity of gold. Upon the surface of that earth are found rude masses of native gold, of a weight almost passing belief. Some weigh 250 ounces, and they hope to discover others of a much larger size, from what the naked natives intimate, when they extol their

\* Idem, Epist. 141.

gold to our people. Nor are the Lestrigonians nor Polyphemi, who feed on human flesh, any longer doubtful. When he proceeded from the Fortunate Islands, now termed the Canaries, to Hispaniola, the island on which he first set foot, turning his prow a little toward the south, he arrived at innumerable islands of savage men, whom they call cannibals, or carribbees; and these, though naked, are courageous warriors. They fight skilfully with bows and clubs, and have boats hollowed from a single tree, yet very capacious, in which they make fierce descents on neighbouring islands, inhabited by milder people. They attack their villages, from which they carry off the men and devour them \*."

Another letter to Pomponius Lætus on the same subject has been cited at large in the body of this work. It is true these extracts give nothing that has not been stated more at large in the Decades of the same author; but they are curious as the very first announcements of the discoveries of Columbus, and as showing the first stamp of these extraordinary events upon the

\* Idem, Epist. 147.

mind of one of the most learned and liberal men of the age.

A collection of the letters of Peter Martyr was published in 1530, under the title of *Opus Epistolarium Petri Martyris Anglerii*. It is divided into thirty-eight books, each containing the letters of one year. The same objections have been made to his letters as to his *Decades*, but they bear the same stamp of candour, probity, and great information. They possess peculiar value from being written at the moment, before the facts they record were distorted or discoloured by prejudice or misrepresentation. His works abound in interesting particulars, not to be found in any contemporary historian. They are rich in thought, but still richer in fact, and are full of urbanity, and of the liberal feeling of a scholar who has mingled with the world. He is a fountain from which others draw, and from which, with a little precaution, they may draw securely. He died in Valladolid, in 1526.

No. XXVIII.

OVIEDO.

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GONZALO FERNANDEZ de Oviedo y Valdes, commonly known as Oviedo, was born in Madrid, 1478, and died in Valladolid, in 1557, aged seventy-nine years. He was of a noble Asturian family, and in his boyhood (in 1490) was appointed one of the pages to prince Juan, heir apparent of Spain, the only son of Ferdinand and Isabella. He was in this situation at the time of the siege and surrender of Granada, was consequently at court at the time that Columbus made his agreement with the catholic sovereigns, and was in the same capacity at Barcelona, and witnessed the triumphant entrance of the discoverer, attended by a number of the natives of the newly found countries.

In 1513 he was sent out to the New World by Ferdinand to superintend the gold founderies. For many years he served there in various offices

of trust and dignity, both under Ferdinand and his grandson and successor Charles V. In 1535 he was made alcaide of the fortress of St. Domingo, in Hispaniola, and afterwards was appointed historiographer of the Indies. At the time of his death he had served the crown upwards of forty years, thirty-four of which were passed in the colonies; and he had crossed the ocean eight times, as he mentions in various parts of his writings. He wrote several works: the most important is a *Chronicle of the Indies*, in fifty books, divided into three parts. The first part, containing nineteen books, was printed at Seville in 1535, and reprinted in 1547 at Salamanca, augmented by a twentieth book containing shipwrecks. The remainder of the work exists in manuscript. The printing of it was commenced at Valladolid in 1557, but was discontinued in consequence of his death. It is one of the unpublished treasures of Spanish colonial history.

He was an indefatigable writer, laborious in collecting and recording facts, and composed a multitude of volumes, which are scattered through the Spanish libraries. His writings are full of

events which happened under his own eye, or were communicated to him by eye-witnesses ; but he was deficient in judgment and discrimination. He collected his facts without caution, and often from sources unworthy of credit. In his account of the first voyage of Columbus he falls into several egregious errors, in consequence of taking the verbal information of a pilot named Herman Perez Matheo, who was in the interest of the Pinzons, and adverse to the admiral. His work is not much to be depended upon in matters relative to Columbus. When he treats of a more advanced period of the New World, from his own actual observation, he is much more satisfactory, though he is accused of listening too readily to popular fables and misrepresentations. His account of the natural productions of the New World and of the customs of its inhabitants, is full of curious particulars ; and the best narratives of some of the minor voyages which succeeded those of Columbus are to be found in the unpublished part of his work.





No. XXIX.

CURA DE LOS PALACIOS.

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ANDREZ BERNALDEZ, or Bernal, generally known by the title of the curate of Los Palacios, from having been curate of the town of Los Palacios from about 1488 to 1513, was born in the town of Fuentes, and was for some time chaplain to Diego Deza, archbishop of Seville, one of the greatest friends to the application of Columbus. Bernaldez was well acquainted with the admiral, who was occasionally his guest, and, in 1496, left many of his manuscripts and journals with him, which the curate made use of in a history of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, in which he introduced an account of the voyages of Columbus. In his narrative of the admiral's coasting along the southern side of Cuba, the curate is more minute and accurate than any other historian. His work exists only in manuscript, but is well known to

historians, who have made frequent use of it. In the possession of O. Rich, esq. of Madrid, is a very curious manuscript chronicle, already quoted in this work, made up from this history of the curate of Los Palacios, and from various other historians of the times, by some contemporary writer. In his account of the voyage of Columbus, he differs in some trivial particulars from the regular copy of the manuscript of the curate. These variations have been carefully examined by the author of this work, and wherever they appear to have been for the better, have been adopted.

No. XXX.

“NAVIGATIONE DEL RE DE CASTIGLIA DELLE ISOLE  
“ E PAESE NUOVAMENTE RITROVATE.”

“NAVIGATIO CHRISTOPHORI COLOMBI.”

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THE above are the titles, in Italian and in Latin, of the earliest narrative of the first and second voyages of Columbus that appeared in print. It was anonymous; and there are some curious particulars in regard to it. It was originally written in Italian by Montalbodo Fracanzo, or Fracanzano, or by Francapano de Montabaldo, for writers differ in regard to the name, and was published in Vicenza, in 1507, in a collection of voyages entitled, *Mondo Novo, e Paese Nuovamente Ritrovati*.

The collection was republished at Milan, in 1508, both in Italian and in a Latin translation made by Archangelo Madrignano, under the title of *Itinerarium Portugallensium*; this title being given because the work related chiefly to the voy-

ages of Luigi Cadamosto, a Venetian in the service of Portugal.

The collection was afterwards augmented by Simon Grinæus with other travels, and printed in Latin, at Basle, in 1533\*, by Hervagio, entitled, *Novus Orbis Regionum*, &c. The edition of Basle, 1555, and the Italian edition of Milan in 1508, have been consulted in the course of this work.

Peter Martyr (*Decad. II. cap. 7.*) alludes to this publication under the first Latin title of the book, *Itinerarium Portugallensium*, and accuses the author, whom by mistake he terms Cadamosto, of having stolen the materials of his book from the three first chapters of his first Decade of the Ocean, of which he says he granted copies in manuscript to several persons, and in particular to certain Venetian ambassadors. Martyr's *Decades* were not published until 1516.

This narrative of the voyages of Columbus is referred to by Geo. Batista Spotorno, in his *Historical Memoir of Columbus*, as having been written by a companion of Columbus.

\* Bibliotheca Pinello.

It is manifest, from a perusal of the narrative, that though the author may have helped himself freely from the manuscript of Martyr, he must have had other sources of information. His description of the person of Columbus, as a man tall of stature and large of frame, of a ruddy complexion and lengthened visage, is not copied from Martyr, nor from any other writer. No historian had indeed preceded him except Sabellicus, in 1504, and the portrait agrees with that subsequently given of Columbus in the biography written by his son.

It is probable that this narrative, which appeared only a year after the death of Columbus, was a piece of literary job-work, written for the collection of voyages published at Vicenza; and that the materials were taken from oral communication, from the account given by Sabellicus, and particularly from the manuscript copy of Martyr's first decade.





No. XXXI.

ANTONIO DE HERRERA.

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ANTONIO HERRERA de Tordesillas, one of the authors most frequently cited in this work, was born in 1565, of Roderick Tordesillas and Agnes de Herrera, his wife. He received an excellent education, and entered into the employ of Vespasian Gonzaga, brother to the duke of Mantua, who was viceroy of Naples for Philip the Second of Spain. He was for some time secretary to this statesman, and intrusted with all his secrets. He was afterwards grand historiographer of the Indies to Philip II., who added to that title a large pension. He wrote various books; but the most celebrated is a General History of the Indies, or American Colonies, in four volumes, containing eight decades. When he undertook this work, all the public archives were thrown open to him, and he had access to documents of all kinds. He

has been charged with great precipitation in the production of his two first volumes, and with negligence in not making sufficient use of the indisputable sources of information thus placed within his reach. The fact was, that he met with historical tracts lying in manuscript which embraced a great part of the first discoveries, and he contented himself with stating events as he found them therein recorded. It is certain that a great part of his work is little more than a transcript of the manuscript history of the Indies by Las Casas, sometimes reducing and improving the language when tumid; omitting the impassioned sallies of the zealous father, when the wrongs of the Indians were in question; and suppressing various circumstances degrading to the character of the Spanish discoverers. The author of the present work has, therefore, frequently put aside the history of Herrera, and consulted the source of his information, the manuscript history of Las Casas.

Muñoz observes, “ that in general Herrera did little more than join together morsels and extracts, taken from various parts, in the way that a writer

arranges chronologically the materials from which he intends to compose a history." He adds, "that had not Herrera been a learned and judicious man, the precipitation with which he put together these materials would have led to innumerable errors."

The remark is just ; yet it is to be considered, that to select and arrange such materials judiciously, and treat them learnedly, was no trifling merit in the historian.

Herrera has been accused also of flattering his nation ; exalting the deeds of his countrymen, and softening and concealing their excesses. There is nothing very serious in this accusation. To illustrate the glory of his nation is one of the noblest offices of the historian ; and it is difficult to speak too highly of the extraordinary enterprises and splendid actions of the Spaniards in those days. In softening their excesses, he fell into an amiable and pardonable error, if it were indeed an error, for a Spanish writer to endeavour to sink them in oblivion.

Vossius passes a high eulogium on Herrera. "No one," he says, "has described with greater

industry and fidelity the magnitude and boundaries of provinces, the tracts of sea, position of capes and islands, of ports and harbours, the windings of rivers and dimensions of lakes, the situation and peculiarities of regions, with the appearance of the heavens, and the designation of places suitable for the establishment of cities.” He has been called among the Spaniards the prince of the historians of America; and it is added, that none have risen since his time capable of disputing with him that title. Much of this praise will appear exaggerated by such as examine the manuscript histories, from which he transferred chapters and entire books, with very little alteration, to his volumes; and a great part of the eulogiums passed on him for his work on the Indies will be found really due to Las Casas, who has too long been eclipsed by his copyist. Still, Herrera has left voluminous proofs of industrious research, extensive information, and great literary talent. His works bear the mark of candour, integrity, and a sincere desire to record the truth.

He died in 1625, at sixty years of age, after having obtained from Philip IV. the promise of the first place of secretary of state that should become vacant.



BISHOP FONSECA.

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THE singular malevolence displayed by bishop Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca toward Columbus and his family, and which was one of the secret and principal causes of their misfortunes, has been frequently noticed in the course of this work. It originated, as has been shown, in some dispute between the admiral and Fonseca at Seville, in 1493, on account of the delay in fitting out the armament for the second voyage, and in regard to the number of domestics to form the household of the admiral. Fonseca received a letter from the sovereigns, tacitly reproving him, and ordering him to show all possible attention to the wishes of Columbus, and to see that he was treated with honour and deference. Fonseca never forgot this affront, and, what with him was the same thing, never forgave it. His spirit appears to have been



of that ungracious kind which has none of the balm of forgiveness, and in which a wound once made for ever rankles. The hostility thus produced continued with increasing virulence throughout the life of Columbus, and at his death was transferred to his son and successor. This persevering animosity has been illustrated in the course of this work by facts and observations cited from authors, some of them contemporary with Fonseca, but who were apparently restrained, by motives of prudence, from giving full vent to the indignation which they evidently felt. Even at the present day, a Spanish historian would be cautious of expressing his feelings freely on the subject, lest they should prejudice his work in the eyes of the ecclesiastical censors of the press. In this way bishop Fonseca has, in a great measure, escaped the general odium his conduct merited.

This prelate had the chief superintendence of Spanish colonial affairs, both under Ferdinand and Isabella, and the emperor Charles V. He was an active and intrepid, but selfish, overbearing, and perfidious man. His administration bears no marks of enlarged and liberal policy; but is

full of traits of arrogance and meanness. He opposed the benevolent attempts of Las Casas to ameliorate the condition of the Indians, and to obtain the abolition of repartimentos ; treating him with personal haughtiness and asperity\*. The reason assigned is, that Fonseca was enriching himself by those very abuses, retaining large numbers of the miserable Indians in slavery to work in his possessions in the colonies.

To show that his character has not been judged with undue severity, it is expedient to point out his invidious and persecuting conduct towards Hernando Cortez. The bishop, while ready to foster rambling adventurers who appeared under his patronage, had never the head or the heart to appreciate the merits of illustrious commanders like Columbus and Cortez.

At a time when disputes arose between Cortez and Diego Velazquez, governor of Cuba, and the latter sought to arrest the conqueror of Mexico in the midst of his brilliant career, Fonseca, with entire disregard of the merits of the case, took a decided part in favour of Velazquez. Personal

\* Herrera, D. II. l. ii. c. 3.

interest was at the bottom of this favour; for a marriage was negotiating between Velazquez and a sister of the bishop\*. Complaints and misrepresentations had been sent to Spain by Velazquez of the conduct of Cortez, who was represented as a lawless and unprincipled adventurer, attempting to usurp absolute authority in New Spain. The true services of Cortez had already excited admiration at court; but such was the influence of Fonseca, that, as in the case of Columbus, he succeeded in prejudicing the mind of the sovereign against one of the most meritorious of his subjects. One Christoval de Tapia, a man destitute of talent or character, but whose great recommendation was his having been in the employ of the bishop†, was invested with powers similar to those once given to Bobadilla, to the prejudice of Columbus. He was to inquire into the conduct of Cortez; and in case he thought fit, to seize him, sequester his property, and supersede him in command. Not content with the regular official letters furnished to Tapia, the

\* Herrera, D. III. l. iv. c. 9.

† Idem, D. III. l. i. c. 15.

bishop, shortly after his departure, sent out Juan Bono de Quexo with blank letters, signed by his own hand, and with others directed to various persons, charging them to admit Tapia for governor, and assuring them that the king considered the conduct of Cortez as disloyal\*. Nothing but the sagacity and firmness of Cortez prevented this measure from completely interrupting, if not defeating, his enterprises.

When the disputes between Cortez and Velazquez came to be examined and decided upon in Spain, the father of Cortez and his lawyers objected to Fonseca's being one of the arbitrators, alleging his enmity to Cortez, his patronage of Velazquez, and his being on the point of giving his sister in marriage to the latter. Cardinal Adrien examined the matter thoroughly, and decided that their request ought to be granted. Fonseca was ordered, therefore, not to preside in these affairs; "it being likewise alleged," says Herrera, "that he had publicly called Cortez a traitor; that he had prevented his representations

\* Herrera, *Hist. Ind. D.* III. l. iii. c. 16.

from being attended to in the council of the Indies ; and had declared that they should never come there while he lived ; that he had not given the king complete information in matters relative to these points of service ; and that he had ordered the India house at Seville not to permit arms, merchandise, or people, to go to New Spain\*.” Cortez himself subsequently declared, “ that he had experienced more trouble and difficulty from the menaces and affronts of the ministers of the king, than it had cost him to earn his victory†.”

A charge of a still darker nature against Fonseca may be found lurking in the pages of Herrera, though so obscure as to have escaped the notice of succeeding historians. He points to the bishop as the instigator of a desperate and perfidious man, who conspired against the life of Hernando Cortez. This was one Antonio de Villafañã, who fomented a conspiracy to assassinate Cortez, and elect Francisco Verdugo, brother-in-law of Velazquez, in his place. While the conspirators were

\*. Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. III. l. iv. c. 13.

† Idem, D. III. l. i. c. 1.

waiting for an opportunity to poniard Cortez, one of them, relenting, apprised him of his danger. Villafaña was arrested. He attempted to swallow a paper containing a list of the conspirators ; but being seized by the throat, a part of it was forced from his mouth containing fourteen names of persons of importance. Villafaña confessed his guilt ; but tortures could not make him inculcate the persons whose names were on the list, who he declared were ignorant of the plot. He was hanged by order of Cortez\*. In the investigation of the disputes between Cortez and Velazquez, which took place in 1522 before a special tribunal, composed of the grand chancellor and other persons of note, this execution of Villafaña was magnified into a cruel and wanton act of power ; and in their eagerness to criminate Cortez, the witnesses on the part of Alvarez declared that Villafaña had been instigated to what he had done by letters from bishop Fonseca (*que se moviò a lo que hizo con cartas del Obispo de Burgos†*). It is not probable that Fonseca had recommended assas-

\* Herrera, Hist. Ind. D. III. l. i. c. 1.

† Idem, D. III. l. iv. c. 3.

sination ; but it shows the character of his agents, and what must have been the malignant nature of his instructions, when these men thought that such an act would accomplish his wishes.

Fonseca died at Burgos on the 4th of November, 1524, and was interred at Coca.



No. XXXIII.

OF THE SITUATION OF THE TERRESTRIAL  
PARADISE.

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THE speculations of Columbus on the situation of the terrestrial paradise, extravagant as they may appear, were such as have occupied many grave and learned men. A slight notice of their opinions on this curious subject may be acceptable to the general reader, and may take from the apparent wildness of the ideas expressed by Columbus.

The abode of our first parents was anciently the subject of anxious inquiry ; and, indeed, mankind have always been prone to picture some place of perfect felicity, where the imagination, disappointed in the coarse realities of life, might revel in an elysium of its own creation. It is an idea not confined to our religion, but is found in the rude creed of the most savage nations, and it pre-

vailed generally among the ancients. The speculations concerning the situation of the garden of Eden resemble those of the Greeks concerning the garden of the Hesperides ; that region of delight, which they for ever placed on the most remote verge of the known world, which their poets embellished with all the charms of fiction, after which they were continually longing, and which they could never find. At one time it was in the grand Oasis of Arabia. The exhausted travellers, after crossing the parched and sultry desert, hailed this verdant spot with rapture ; they refreshed themselves under its shady bowers and beside its cooling streams, as the crew of a tempest-tost vessel repose on the shores of some green island in the deep ; and from its being thus isolated amidst an ocean of sand, they gave it the name of the Island of the Blessed. As geographical knowledge increased, the situation of the Hesperian gardens was continually removed to a greater distance. It was transferred to the borders of the great Syrtis, in the neighbourhood of Mount Atlas. Here, after traversing the frightful deserts of Barca, the traveller found himself in a fair and fertile country, watered by rivulets and

gushing fountains. The oranges and citrons transported hence to Greece, where they were as yet unknown, delighted the Athenians by their golden beauty and delicious flavour, and they thought none but the garden of the Hesperides could produce such glorious fruit. In this way the happy region of the ancients was transported from place to place, but still in the most remote and obscure extremity of the world, until it was fabled to visit the Canaries, thence called the Fortunate, or the Hesperian, Islands. Here it remained, because discovery advanced no farther, and because these islands were so distant, and so little known, as to allow full latitude to the fictions of the poet \*.

In like manner, the situation of the terrestrial paradise, or garden of Eden, was long a subject of curious disputation, and occupied the laborious attention of the most learned theologians. Some placed it in Palestine, or the Holy Land; others in Mesopotamia, in that rich and beautiful tract of country embraced by the wanderings of the Tigris and the Euphrates; others in Armenia, in

\* Gosselyn, *Recherch. sur la Geog. des Anciens*, t. i.

a valley surrounded by precipitous and inaccessible mountains, and imagined that Enoch and Elijah were transported thither, out of the sight of mortals, to live in a state of terrestrial bliss, until the second coming of our Saviour. There were others who gave it situations widely remote, such as in the Trapobana of the ancients, at present known as the island of Ceylon ; or in the island of Sumatra ; or in the Fortunate or Canary Islands ; or in one of the islands of Sunda ; or in some favoured spot under the equinoctial line.

Great difficulty was encountered by these speculators to reconcile the allotted place with the description given in Genesis of the garden of Eden ; particularly of the great fountain which watered it, and which afterwards divided itself into four rivers, the Pison or Phison, the Gihon, the Euphrates, and the Heddekel. Those who were in favour of the Holy Land supposed that the Jordan was the great river which afterwards divided itself into the Phison, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates ; but that the sands have choked up the ancient beds by which those streams were supplied ; that originally the Phison traversed Arabia Deserta

and Arabia Felix, from whence it pursued its course to the gulf of Persia ; that the Gihon bathed northern or Stony Arabia, and fell into the Arabian Gulf or the Red Sea ; that the Euphrates and the Tigris passed by Eden to Assyria and Chaldea, from whence they discharged themselves into the Persian Gulf.

By most of the early commentators, the river Gihon is supposed to be the Nile. The source of this river was unknown, but was evidently far distant from the spots from whence the Tigris and the Euphrates arose. This difficulty, however, was ingeniously overcome, by giving it a subterranean course of some hundreds of leagues from the common fountain, until it issued forth to daylight in Abyssinia \*. In like manner, subterranean courses were given to the Tigris and Euphrates, passing under the Red Sea, until they sprang forth in Armenia, as if just issuing from one common source. So, also, those who placed the terrestrial paradise in islands, supposed that the rivers which issued from it, and formed those heretofore named, either traversed the surface of the sea, as fresh water, by its

\* Teyjoo, *Theatro Critico*, lib. vii. § 2.

greater lightness, may float above the salt ; or that they flowed through deep veins and channels of the earth, as the fountain of Arethusa was said to sink into the ground in Greece, and rise in the island of Sicily ; while the river Alpheus, pursuing it, but with less perseverance, rose somewhat short of it in the sea.

Some contended that the deluge had destroyed the garden of Eden, and altered the whole face of the earth ; so that the rivers had changed their beds, and had taken different directions from those mentioned in Genesis. Others, however, amongst whom was St. Augustine, who, in his commentary upon the Book of Genesis, maintained that the terrestrial paradise still existed, with its original beauty and delights, but that it was inaccessible to mortals, being on the summit of a mountain of stupendous height, reaching into the third region of the air, and approaching the moon ; being thus protected by its elevation from the ravages of the deluge.

By some, this mountain was placed under the equinoctial line, or under that band of the heavens metaphorically called by the ancients “ the table



of the sun \*," comprising the space between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, beyond which the sun never passed in his annual course. Here would reign a uniformity of nights and days, and seasons, and the elevation of the mountain would raise it above the heats and storms of the lower regions. Others transported the garden beyond the equinoctial line, and placed it in the southern hemisphere, supposing that the torrid zone might be the flaming sword appointed to defend its entrance against mortals. They had a fanciful train of argument to support their theory. They observed that the terrestrial paradise must be in the noblest and happiest part of the globe ; that part must be under the noblest part of the heavens ; as the merits of a place do not so much depend upon the virtues of the earth as upon the happy influences of the stars and the favourable and benign aspect of the heavens. Now, according to philosophers, the world was divided into two hemispheres. The southern they considered the head, and the northern the feet or under part. The right hand the east, from whence commenced the

\* Herodot. l. iii. Virgil, Georg. i. Pomp. Mela, l. iii. c. x.



movement of the *primum mobile*, and the left the west, towards which it moved. This supposed, they observed that it was manifest that as the head of all things, natural and artificial, is always the best and noblest part, governing the other parts of the body, so the south, being the head of the earth, ought to be superior and nobler than either east, or west, or north; and, in accordance with this, they cited the opinion of various philosophers among the ancients, and more especially of Ptolemy, that the stars of the southern hemisphere were larger, more resplendent, more perfect, and of course of greater virtue and efficacy than those of the northern; an error universally prevalent until disproved by modern discovery. Hence they concluded, that in this southern hemisphere, in this head of the earth, under this purer and brighter sky, and these more potent and benignant stars, was placed the terrestrial paradise.

Various ideas were entertained as to the magnitude of this blissful region. As Adam and all his progeny were to have lived there, had he not sinned, and as there would have been no such thing as death to thin the number of mankind, it

was inferred that the terrestrial paradise must be of great extent to contain them. Some gave it a size equal to Europe or Africa, others gave it the whole southern hemisphere. St. Augustine supposed that as mankind multiplied, numbers would be translated, without death, to heaven ; the parents, perhaps, when their children had arrived at mature age ; or portions of the human race at the end of certain periods, and when the population of the terrestrial paradise had attained a certain amount. Others supposed that mankind, remaining in a state of primitive innocence, would not have required so much space as at present. Having no need of rearing animals for subsistence, no land would have been required for pasturage ; and the earth not being cursed with sterility, there would have been no need of extensive tracts of country to permit of fallow land and the alternation of crops required in husbandry. The spontaneous and never-failing fruits of the garden would have been abundant for the simple wants of man. Still, that the human race might not be crowded, but might have ample space for recreation and enjoyment, and the charms of variety and change, some

allowed at least a hundred leagues of circumference to the garden.

St. Basil\*, in his eloquent discourse on paradise, expatiates with rapture on the joys of this sacred abode, elevated to the third region of the air, and under the happiest skies. There a pure and never-failing pleasure is furnished to every sense. The eye delights in the admirable clearness of the atmosphere, in the verdure and beauty of the trees, and the never-withering bloom of the flowers. The ear is regaled with the singing of the birds, the sense of smelling the aromatic odours of the land. In like manner the other senses have each their peculiar enjoyments. There the vicissitudes of the seasons are unknown, and the climate unites the fruitfulness of summer, the joyful abundance of autumn, and the sweet freshness and tranquillity of spring. There the earth is always green, the flowers ever blooming, the waters limpid and pure; not rushing in rude and turbid torrents, but welling up in crystal fountains, and winding in peaceful and silver streams. There no

\* St. Basil was called the Great. His works were read and admired by all the world, even by Pagans. They are written in an elevated and majestic style, with great splendour of idea and vast erudition.

harsh and boisterous winds are permitted to shake and disturb the air, and ravage the beauty of the groves ; there prevails no melancholy nor darksome weather ; no drowning rain, nor pelting hail ; no forked lightning, nor rending and resounding thunder ; no wintry pinching cold, nor withering and panting summer heat ; nor any thing else that can give pain, or sorrow, or annoyance ; but all is bland, and gentle, and serene ; a perpetual youth and joy reigns throughout all nature, and nothing decays and dies.

The same idea is given by St. Ambrosius in his book on paradise \*, an author likewise consulted and cited by Columbus. He wrote in the fourth century, and his touching eloquence and graceful yet vigorous style ensured great popularity to his writings. Many of these opinions are cited by Glanville, usually called Bartholomeus Anglicus, in his work *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, a work with which Columbus was evidently acquainted. It was a species of encyclopedia of the general knowledge current at the time, and likely to recommend itself to a curious and inquiring voyager. This

\* St. Ambros. Opera. Edit. Coignard. Parisiis, MDCXC.

author cites an assertion as made by St. Basilus and St. Ambrosius, that the water of the fountain which proceeds from the garden of Eden falls into a great lake, with such a tremendous noise, that the inhabitants of the neighbourhood are born deaf, and that from this lake proceeds the four chief rivers mentioned in Genesis\*.

This passage, however, is not to be found in the Hexameron of either Basilus or Ambrosius, from which it is quoted; neither is it in the Oration on Paradise by the former, nor in the letter on the same subject, written by Ambrosius to Ambrosius Sabinus. It must be a misquotation. Columbus, however, appears to have been struck with it, and Las Casas is of opinion† that he derived thence his idea that the vast body of fresh water, which filled the gulf of La Ballena, or Paria, flowed

\* “Paradisus autem in Oriente, in altissimo monte, de cujus cacumine cadentes aquæ, maximum faciunt lacum, quæ in suo casu tantum faciunt strepitum et fragorem, quod omnes incolæ, juxta prædictum lacum, nascuntur surdi, ex immoderato sonitu seu fragore sensum auditus in parvulis corrumpente. *Ut dicit Basilus in Hexameron, similiter et Ambros.* Ex illo lacu, velut ex uno fonte, procedunt illa flumina quatuor, Phison qui et Ganges, Gyon qui et Nilus dicitur, et Tigris ac Euphrates.”

Bartholomæi Anglici de Proprietatibus Rerum, l. xv. c. cxii.

Frankfurti, 1540.

† Las Casas, Hist. Ind. c. cxli.

from the fountain of Paradise, though from a remote distance ; and that in this gulf, which he supposed in the extreme part of Asia, originated the Nile, the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Ganges, which might be conducted under the land and sea, by subterraneous channels, to the places where they spring forth on the earth and assume their proper name.

I forbear to enter into various other of the voluminous speculations which have been formed relative to the terrestrial paradise ; and, perhaps, it may be thought that I have already said too much on so fanciful a subject ; but to illustrate clearly the character of Columbus, it is necessary to elucidate those veins of thought passing through his mind while considering the singular phenomena of the unknown regions he was exploring, and which are often but slightly and vaguely developed in his journals and letters. These speculations, likewise, like those concerning fancied islands in the ocean, carry us back to the time, and make us feel the mystery and conjectural charm that reigned over the greatest part of the world, and which have since been completely dispelled by modern dis-



covery. Enough has been cited to show, that, in his observations concerning the terrestrial paradise, Columbus was not indulging in any fanciful and presumptuous chimeras, the offspring of a heated and disordered brain. However visionary his conjectures may seem, they were all grounded on written opinions held little less than oracular in his day ; and they will be found on examination to be far exceeded by the speculations and theories of sages held illustrious for their wisdom and erudition in the school and the cloister.



No. XXXIV.

WILL OF COLUMBUS.

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IN the name of the most holy Trinity, who inspired me with the idea, and afterwards made it perfectly clear to me, that I could navigate and go to the Indies from Spain, by traversing the ocean westwardly ; which I communicated to the king Don Ferdinand and to the queen Dona Isabella, our sovereigns ; and they were pleased to furnish me the necessary equipment of men and ships, and to make me their admiral over the said ocean, in all parts lying to the west of an imaginary line drawn from pole to pole, a hundred leagues west of the Cape de Verde and Azore Islands ; also appointing me their viceroy and governor over all continents and islands that I might discover beyond the same line westwardly ; with the right of being succeeded in the said offices by my eldest son and his heirs for ever ; and a grant of the tenth part of all things found in the said

jurisdiction ; and of all rents and revenues arising from it ; and the eighth of all the lands and every thing else, together with the salary corresponding to my rank of admiral, viceroy, and governor, and all other emoluments accruing thereto, as is more fully expressed in the title and agreement sanctioned by their highnesses.

And it pleased the Lord Almighty that in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-two I should discover the continent of the Indies and many islands, among them Hispaniola, which the Indians call Ayte, and the Monicongos, Cipango. I then returned to Castile to their highnesses, who approved of my undertaking a second enterprise for further discoveries and settlements ; and the Lord gave me victory over the island of Hispaniola, which extends six hundred leagues, and I conquered it and made it tributary ; and I discovered many islands inhabited by cannibals, and seven hundred leagues to the west of Hispaniola, among which is Jamaica, which we call Santiago ; and three hundred and thirty-three leagues of continent from south to west, besides a hundred and seven to the north, which I discovered in my

first voyage ; together with many islands, as may more clearly be seen by my letters, memorials, and charts. And as we hope in God that before long a good and great revenue will be derived from the above islands and continent, of which, for the reasons aforesaid, belong to me the tenth and the eighth, with the salaries and emoluments specified above; and considering that we are mortals, and that it is proper for every one to settle his affairs, and to leave declared to his heirs and successors the property he possesses or may have a right to : Wherefore I have concluded to make an entailed estate (mayorazgo) out of the said eighth of the lands, places, and revenues, in the manner which I now proceed to state.

In the first place, I am to be succeeded by Don Diego, my son, who in case of death without children is to be succeeded by my other son, Ferdinand ; and should God dispose of him also without having children, and without my having any other son, then my brother, Don Bartholomew, is to succeed, and after him his eldest son ; and if God should dispose of him without heirs, he shall be succeeded by his sons from one to another for

ever ; or, in the failure of a son, to be succeeded by Don Ferdinand, after the same manner, from son to son successively ; or, in their place, by my brothers Bartholomew and Diego. And should it please the Lord that the estate, after having continued some time in the line of any of the above successors, should stand in need of an immediate and lawful male heir, the succession shall then devolve to the nearest relation, being a man of legitimate birth, and bearing the name of Columbus, derived from his father and his ancestors. This entailed estate shall in no wise be inherited by a woman, except in case that no male is to be found, either in this or any other quarter of the world, of my real lineage, whose name as well as that of his ancestors shall have always been Columbus. In such an event (which may God forefend), then the female of legitimate birth most nearly related to the preceding possessor of the estate shall succeed to it ; and this is to be under the conditions herein stipulated at foot, which must be understood to extend as well to Don Diego, my son, as to the aforesaid and their heirs, every one of them, to be fulfilled by them ; and

failing to do so, they are to be deprived of the succession, for not having complied with what shall herein be expressed ; and the estate to pass to the person most nearly related to the one who held the right : and the person thus succeeding shall in like manner forfeit the estate, should he also fail to comply with the said conditions ; and another person, the nearest of my lineage, shall succeed, provided he abide by them, so that they may be observed for ever in the form prescribed. This forfeiture is not to be incurred for trifling matters, originating in lawsuits, but in important cases, when the glory of God, or my own, or that of my family, may be concerned, which supposes a perfect fulfilment of all the things hereby ordained ; all which I recommend to the courts of justice. And I supplicate his holiness who now is, and those that may succeed in the holy church, that if it should happen that this my will and testament has need of his holy order and command for its fulfilment, that such order be issued in virtue of obedience, and under penalty of excommunication, and that it shall not be in any wise blemished. And I also pray the king and queen, our sovereigns, and

their eldest born, the prince Don Juan, our lord, and their successors, for the sake of the services I have done them, and because it is just, that it may please them not to permit this my will and constitution of my entailed estate to be in any way altered, but to leave it in the form and manner which I have ordained, for ever ; for the greater glory of the Almighty, and that it may be the root and basis of my lineage, and a memento of the services I have rendered their highnesses ; that, being born in Genoa, I came over to serve them in Castile, and discovered, to the west of Terra Firma, the Indies and islands before mentioned. I accordingly pray their highnesses to order that this my privilege and testament be held valid, and be executed summarily and without any opposition or demur, according to the letter. I also pray the grandees of the realm, and the lords of the council, and all others having administration of justice, to be pleased not to suffer this my will and testament to be of no avail, but to cause it to be fulfilled as by me ordained ; it being just that a noble, who has served the king and queen, and the kingdom, should be respected in the disposition of



his estate by will, testament, institution of entail or inheritance, and that the same be not infringed either in whole or in part.

In the first place, my son, Don Diego, and all my successors and descendants, as well as my brothers, Bartholomew and Diego, shall bear my arms, such as I shall leave them after my days, without inserting any thing else in them; and they shall be their seal to seal withal. Don Diego, my son, or any other who may inherit this estate, on coming into possession of the inheritance, shall sign with the signature which I now make use of, which is an X. with an S. over it, and an M. with a Roman A. over it, and over that an S., and then a Greek Y. with an S. over it, with its lines and points, as is my custom, as may be seen by my signatures, of which there are many, and it will be seen by the present one.

He shall only write "the admiral," whatever other titles the king may have conferred on him. This is to be understood as respects his signature, but not the enumeration of his titles, which he can make at full length, if agreeable; only the signature is to be "the admiral."



The said Don Diego, or any other inheritor of this estate, shall possess my offices of admiral of the ocean, which is to the west of an imaginary line, which his highness ordered to be drawn, running from pole to pole a hundred leagues beyond the Azores, and as many more beyond the Cape de Verd Islands, over all which I was made, by his order, the admiral of the sea, with all the privileges enjoyed by Don Henrique in the admiralty of Castile, and they made me their governor and viceroy perpetually, and for ever, over all the islands and main land discovered or to be discovered, for myself and heirs, as is more fully shown by my treaty and privilege as above mentioned.

Item,—The said Don Diego, or any other inheritor of this estate, shall distribute the revenue which it may please our Lord to grant him in the following manner, under the above penalty.

First, of the whole income of this estate, now and at all times, and of whatever may be had or collected from it, he shall give the fourth part annually to my brother, Don Bartholomew Columbus, adelantado of the Indies ; and this is to continue till he shall

have acquired an income of a million of maravedies for his support, and for the services he has rendered and will continue to render to this entailed estate; which million he is to receive, as stated, every year, if the said fourth amount to so much, and that he have nothing else; but if he possess a part or the whole of that amount in rents, that henceforth he shall not enjoy the said million, nor any part of it, except that he shall have in the said fourth part unto the said quantity of a million, if it should amount to so much; and as much as he shall have of revenue beside the fourth part, whatever sum of maravedies of known rent from property or perpetual offices, the said quantity of rent or revenue from property or offices shall be discounted; and from the said million shall be reserved whatever marriage portion he may receive with any female he may espouse; so that, whatever he may receive in marriage with his wife, no deduction shall be made on that account from the said million, but only for whatever he may acquire, or may have, over and above his wife's dowry. And when it shall please God that he or his heirs and descendants shall derive from their property

and offices a revenue of a million arising from rénts, neither he nor his heirs shall enjoy any longer any thing from the said fourth part of the entailed estate, which shall remain with Don Diego, or who may inherit it.

Item,—From the revenues of the said estate, or from any other fourth part of it (should its amount be adequate to it), shall be paid every year to my son Ferdinand two millions, till such time as his revenue shall amount to two millions, in the same form and manner as in the case of Bartholomew, who as well as his heirs are to have the million, or the part that may be wanting.

Item,—The said Don Diego or Don Bartholomew shall make, out of the said estate, for my brother Diego, such provision as may enable him to live decently, as he is my brother, to whom I assign no particular sum, as he has attached himself to the church, and that will be given him which is right ; and this to be given him in a mass, and before any thing shall have been received by Ferdinand my son, or Bartholomew my brother, or their heirs, and also according to the amount of the income of the estate. And in case of dis-

cord, the case is to be referred to two of our relations, or other men of honour; and should they disagree among themselves, they will choose a third person as arbitrator, being virtuous and not distrusted by either party.

Item,—All this revenue which I bequeath to Bartholomew, to Ferdinand, and to Diego, shall be delivered to, and received by, them as prescribed, under the obligation of being faithful and loyal to Diego my son or his heirs, they as well as their children: and should it appear that they, or any of them, had proceeded against him in any thing touching his honour, or the prosperity of the family, or of the estate, either in word or deed, whereby might come a scandal and debasement to my family, and a detriment to my estate; in that case nothing further shall be given to them or him, from that time forward, inasmuch as they are always to be faithful to Diego and to his successors.

Item,—As it was my intention, when I first instituted this entailed estate, to dispose, or that my son Diego should dispose for me, of the tenth part of the income in favour of necessitous per-

sons, as a tithe, and in commemoration of the Almighty and Eternal God ; and persisting still in this opinion, and hoping that his high majesty will assist me and those who may inherit it in this or the New World, I have resolved that the said tithe shall be paid in the manner following :

First,—It is to be understood that the fourth part of the revenue of the estate which I have ordained and directed to be given to Don Bartholomew, till he have an income of one million, includes the tenth of the whole revenue of the estate ; and that in proportion as the income of my brother Don Bartholomew shall increase, as it has to be discounted from the revenue of the fourth part of the entailed estate, that the said revenue shall be calculated, to know how much the tenth part amounts to ; and the part which exceeds what is necessary to make up the million for Don Bartholomew shall be received by such of my family as may most stand in need of it, discounting it from the said tenth, if their income do not amount to fifty thousand maravedies ; and should any of these come to have an income to this amount, such a part shall be awarded them as two

persons, chosen for the purpose, may determine along with Don Diego or his heirs. Thus it is to be understood that the million which I leave to Don Bartholomew comprehends the tenth of the whole revenue of the estate ; which revenue is to be distributed among my nearest and most needy relations in the manner I have directed ; and when Don Bartholomew shall have an income of one million, and that nothing more shall be due to him on account of said fourth part, then Don Diego my son, or the person who may be in possession of the estate, along with two other persons which I shall herein point out, shall inspect the accounts, and so direct that the tenth of the revenue shall still continue to be paid to the most necessitous members of my family that may be found in this or any other quarter of the world, who shall diligently be sought out ; and they are to be paid out of the fourth part, from which Don Bartholomew is to derive his million ; which sums are to be taken into account and deducted from the said tenth, which, should it amount to more, the overplus, as it arises from the fourth part, shall be



given to the most necessitous persons, as aforesaid : and should it not be sufficient, that Don Bartholomew shall have it until his own estate goes on increasing, leaving the said million in part or in the whole.

Item,—The said Don Diego my son, or whoever may be the inheritor, shall appoint two persons of conscience and authority, and most nearly related to the family, who are to examine the revenue and its amount carefully, and to cause the said tenth to be paid out of the fourth from which Don Bartholomew is to receive his million, to the most necessitous members of my family that may be found here or elsewhere, whom they shall look for diligently, upon their consciences ; and as it might happen that the said Don Diego, or others after him, for reasons which may concern their own welfare, or the credit and support of the estate, may be unwilling to make known the full amount of the income ; nevertheless, I charge him on his conscience to pay the sum aforesaid ; and I charge them on their souls and consciences not to denounce or make it known, except with



the consent of Don Diego, or the person that may succeed him ; but let the above tithe be paid in the manner I have directed.

Item,—In order to avoid all disputes in the choice of the two nearest relations who are to act with Don Diego, or his heirs, I hereby elect Don Bartholomew my brother for one, and Don Fernando my son for the other ; and when these two shall enter upon the business, they shall choose two other persons among the most trusty and most nearly related, and these again shall elect two others when it shall be question of commencing the examination ; and thus it shall be managed with diligence from one to the other, for the service and glory of God, and the benefit of the said entailed estate.

Item,—I also enjoin Diego, or any one that may inherit the estate, to have and maintain in the city of Genoa one person of our lineage, to reside there with his wife, and appoint him a sufficient revenue to enable him to live decently as a person closely connected with the family, of which he is to be the root and basis in that city ; from

which great good may accrue to him, inasmuch as I was born there and came from thence.

Item,—The said Don Diego, or whoever shall inherit the estate, must remit in bills, or in any other way, all such sums as he may be able to save out of the revenue of the estate, and direct purchases to be made in his name, or that of his heirs, in a stock in the Bank of St. George, which gives an interest of six per cent. and is secure money ; and this shall be devoted to the purposes I am about to explain.

Item,—As it becomes every man of rank and property to serve God, either personally or by means of his wealth, and as all moneys deposited with St. George are quite safe, and Genoa is a noble city and powerful by sea, and as at the time that I undertook to set out upon the discovery of the Indies it was with the intention of supplicating the king and queen, our lords, that whatever moneys should be derived from the said Indies should be invested in the conquest of Jerusalem, and as I did so supplicate them ; if they do this, it will be well : if not, at all events the said Diego, or

such person as may succeed him in this trust, to collect together all the money he can, and accompany the king our lord, should he go to the conquest of Jerusalem, or else go there himself with all the force he can command; and in pursuing this intention, it will please the Lord to assist towards the accomplishment of the plan; and should he not be able to effect the conquest of the whole, no doubt he will achieve it in part. Let him, therefore, collect and make a fund of all his wealth in St. George of Genoa, and let it multiply there till such time as it may appear to him that something of consequence may be effected as respects the project on Jerusalem; for I believe, that when their highnesses shall see that this is contemplated, they will wish to realize it themselves, or will afford him, as their servant and vassal, the means of doing it for them.

Item,—I charge my son Diego and my descendants, especially whoever may inherit this estate, which consists, as aforesaid, of the tenth of whatsoever may be had or found in the Indies, and the eighth part of the lands and rents, all which, together with my rights and emoluments as ad-

miral, viceroy, and governor, amount to more than twenty-five per cent.,—I say, that I require of him to employ all this revenue, as well as his person and all the means in his power, in well and faithfully serving and supporting their highnesses or their successors, even to the loss of life and property ; since it was their highnesses, next to God, who first gave me the means of getting and achieving this property, although it is true I came over to these realms to invite them to the enterprise, and that a long time elapsed before any provision was made for carrying it into execution ; which, however, is not surprising, as this was an undertaking of which all the world was ignorant, and no one had any faith in it ; wherefore I am by so much the more indebted to them, as well as because they have since also much favoured and promoted me.

Item,—I also require of Diego, or whomsoever may be in possession of the estate, that in the case of any schism taking place in the church of God, or that any person of whatever class or condition should attempt to despoil it of its property and honours, they hasten to offer at the feet of his

holiness, that is, if they are not heretics (which God forbid), their persons, power, and wealth, for the purpose of suppressing such schism, and preventing any spoliation of the honour and property of the church.

Item,—I command the said Diego, or whosoever may possess the said estate, to labour and strive for the honour, welfare, and aggrandizement of the city of Genoa, and to make use of all his power and means in defending and enhancing the good and credit of that republic, in all things not contrary to the service of the church of God, or the high dignity of the king and queen our lords, and their successors.

Item,—The said Diego, or whoever may possess or succeed to the estate, out of the fourth part of the whole revenue, from which, as aforesaid, is to be taken the tenth, when Don Bartholomew, or his heirs, shall have saved the two millions, or part of them, and when the time shall come of making a distribution among our relations, shall apply and invest said tenth in providing marriages for such daughters of our lineage as may require it, and in doing all the good in their power.

Item,—When a suitable time shall arrive, he shall order a church to be built in the island of Hispaniola, and in the most convenient spot, to be called Santa Maria de la Concepcion ; to which is to be annexed an hospital, upon the best possible plan, like those of Italy and Castile, and a chapel is to be erected to say mass in for the good of my soul and those of my ancestors and successors, with great devotion, since no doubt it will please the Lord to give us a sufficient revenue for this and the aforementioned purposes.

Item,—I also order Diego my son, or whomsoever may inherit after him, to spare no pains in having and maintaining in the island of Hispaniola four good professors of theology, to the end and aim of their studying and labouring to convert to our holy faith the inhabitants of the Indies ; and in proportion as, by God's will, the revenue of the estate shall increase, in the same degree shall the number of teachers and devout persons increase, who are to strive to make Christians of the natives, in attaining which no expense should be thought too great. And in commemoration of all that I hereby ordain, and of the foregoing, a monument of mar-

ble shall be erected in the said church of La Concepcion, in the most conspicuous place, to serve as a record of what I here enjoin on the said Diego, as well as to other persons who may look upon it ; which marble shall contain an inscription to the same effect.

Item,—I also require of Diego, my son, and whomsoever may succeed him in the estate, that every time and as often as he confesses, he first show this obligation, or a copy of it, to the confessor, praying him to read it through, that he may be enabled to inquire respecting its fulfilment ; from which will redound great good and happiness to his soul.

S.

S. A. S.

X. M. Y.

EL ALMIRANTE.





No. XXXV.

SIGNATURE OF COLUMBUS.

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As every thing respecting Columbus is full of interest, his signature has been a matter of some discussion. It partook of the pedantic and bigoted character of the age, and perhaps of the peculiar character of the man, who, considering himself mysteriously elected and set apart from among men for certain great purposes, adopted a correspondent formality and solemnity in all his concerns. His signature was as follows :

S.

S. A. S.

X. M. Y.

XPO FERENS.

The first half of the signature, XPO (for CHRISTO), is in Greek letters; the second,

FERENS, is in Latin. Such was the usage of those days; and even at present both Greek and Roman letters are used in signatures and inscriptions in Spain.

The ciphers or initials above the signature are supposed to represent a pious ejaculation. To read them, one must begin with the lower letters, and connect them with those above. Signor Geo. Batista Spotorno conjectures them to mean either *Xristus* (*Christus*), *Sancta Maria*, *Yosephus*, or *Salva me, Xristus, Maria, Yosephus*. The *North-American Review* for April, 1827, suggests the substitution of *Jesus* for *Josephus*, which appears an improvement on the suggestion of Spotorno.

It was an ancient usage in Spain, and it has not entirely gone by, to accompany the signature with some words of religious purport. One object of this practice was to show the writer to be a Christian. This was of some importance in a country in which Jews and Mahometans were proscribed and persecuted.

Don Fernando, son to Columbus, says that his father, when he took his pen in hand, usually commenced by writing "*Jesus cum Maria sit*

nobis in via ;” and the book which the admiral prepared and sent to the sovereigns, containing the prophecies which he considered as referring to his discoveries and to the rescue of the holy sepulchre, begins with the same words. This practice is akin to that of placing the initials of pious words above the signature, and gives great probability to the mode in which they have been deciphered.



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